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# THE INDEPENDENT

Tuesday 14 October 1997

45p No 3,427 \*\*

## INSIDE TODAY

### 15/HEALTH

Back pain: the doctor with an answer at his fingertips

### 19/GIRL POWER

Our answer to GQ

## TODAY'S NEWS

### PM jostled in Ulster

The Prime Minister was jeered and jostled by angry loyalists in Belfast yesterday, after he had shaken hands with Gerry Adams, the Sinn Fein leader. Mr Adams had told Tony Blair that he hoped he would be the last British prime minister with jurisdiction in Ireland after the first such handshake since Lloyd George met Michael Collins in 1921. But anti-IRA protesters yelled 'traitor' at Mr Blair and told him his hands were covered in blood when he visited a shopping centre later. Page 5

### Brent Spar won't sink

The Brent Spar oil storage tank, which Greenpeace forced Shell not to dispose of at sea, is likely to be broken up on land in Norway. Page 9

### Alzheimer's discovery

Oxford scientists have made a breakthrough in the understanding of Alzheimer's disease. The interaction of two genes, which are carried by one in 15 of the population, greatly increase the risk of getting the degenerative disease. This may help doctors to interrupt it; but also raises important ethical questions about testing for it. Page 3

### Egypt's rebel war

For five years Egypt has been struggling with the uprising of Islamic militants in a savage conflict which has caused 1,100 deaths. The Islamic movement had broken apart and President Mubarak was boasting of success. But the latest hard line taken by Israel against Hamas has made things dramatically tougher for the Egyptian government. Robert Fisk, Page 12

## SEEN & HEARD

A dose of spirits can cure heart disease, doctors have discovered. When injected internally, a dram of pure alcohol can restore a damaged heart and have its owner back popping up the bar quicker than you can say Glenfiddich. The novel treatment has been used successfully on 300 patients at the Royal Brompton hospital in London and is attracting world-wide interest. Patients remain awake despite being dosed with liquid at twice the alcoholic strength of normal spirits. It is introduced via a catheter in a keyhole treatment direct to the heart for sufferers from a condition called hypertrophic obstructive cardiomyopathy, which affects 12,000 people. Apparently bathing the thickened muscle in pure alcohol destroys it, with results as effective as open heart surgery.

WEATHER The Eye, page 10  
TELEVISION The Eye, page 12  
CROSSWORDS Page 32 and the Eye, page 9

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## Dropping the Pound: Blair, Brown clash on the biggest issue of all



A damaging rift has opened between the Prime Minister and Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, over membership of the European single currency. Our Political Editor reports on the makings of a political and economic crisis.

The Treasury is trying to bounce Tony Blair into a decision which could lead to the early death of the pound. Sources close to the Chancellor of the Exchequer are actively briefing selected reporters that Mr Blair is poised to announce early membership of the single currency, as soon as possible after the first-wave launch in 1999.

The briefing was again repudiated by the Prime Minister's office yesterday, but the repeated reports are feeding City and Tory suspicion that Parliament, the markets and the voters are being softened-up for the abolition of sterling.

In fact there are signs that the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, could be over-reaching himself, by trying to bounce the Prime Minister, the country and ster-

ling into a single currency. Mr Brown, who is said to regard himself as the Government's managing director – with Mr Blair as non-executive chairman – could be underestimating the Prime Minister's political determination not to repeat past mistakes, particularly the disastrous decision to join the European Exchange Rate Mechanism in 1990.

While Mr Blair appears content to give the Chancellor his head on issues like Bank of England independence on interest rates, he has been known to veto some of Mr Brown's more head-strong judgements – like his pre-election plan to introduce a 50p higher-rate income tax band for the better-off.

Mr Blair rejected that proposal because it smacked of the high-tax image Labour had fatally presented to the voters in 1997, under Neil Kinnock.

The Prime Minister maintains a highly political caution about early membership of the single currency, and Mr Brown is risking the kind of open split between No 10 and No 11 that led to the eventual resignations, as Chancellor, of Peter Thorneycroft in 1957, and Nigel Lawson in 1989.

Some ministers say Mr Blair would want to square Rupert Murdoch and his newspaper – particularly the Euro-phobic

BY ANTHONY BEVINS

*Sun* – before he even thought of putting the single currency issue to a referendum of the electorate, as promised in the May manifesto.

But a Treasury-inspired report in yesterday's *Daily Mail* said Mr Blair would use the opportunity offered by a

### INSIDE: WHO'LL WIN?

'It would not be surprising if on those occasions when Tony Blair and Gordon Brown do have differences, Brown sometimes goes his own way. But on most of the big issues the Prime Minister has eventually got his way when it counted.'

Donald Macintyre, page 21

Letters, page 20

Business, page 25

is no change in government policy.

It was also denied by the Treasury, which described it less robustly as "speculation". But yesterday's *Mail* said: "Mr Blair's move is a victory for Gordon Brown, a long-time enthusiast for a single currency."

"He has put enormous pressure on the Prime Minister who has prevaricated for months over a decision he fears could make or break his premiership."

The line from No 10 was, again, that the Government's position had not changed. Mr Blair told *The Independent* last month: "We have said that we will keep the option [of joining a single currency], and we will obviously keep it open ...

"If we want to retain any influence in shaping the debate on the single currency, then it is essential that we remain open to the possibility of entry, though as I have said before I think it is highly unlikely that we will be in the first wave."

Because European Union members will have to make a judgement by next spring on which countries can join in the first wave, the Government will have to make a statement before the end of the year on whether it plans to apply for first-wave membership.

The British open option does not require an early commitment to membership – although even the most Euro-sceptic ministers, like Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, have said it would be difficult, if not impossible, to remain outside a proven, successful single currency.

Peter Lilley, the shadow Chancellor, said yesterday: "If it is not in Britain's interests to join now, it would be illogical to commit us now to definitely join at some future date."

But he added: "Once again, the Labour government is playing party politics with critical national decisions."

"The British people are entitled to clear, on-the-record statements from the Chancellor, rather than off-the-record briefings to the press by Mr Brown's spin-doctor-in-chief, Charlie Whelan."

At a meeting with EU colleagues in Luxembourg yesterday, Mr Brown himself stuck rigidly to the official government line.

It was "very unlikely", he said, that the United Kingdom would join the euro at the start of 1999, because of the "formidable obstacles" the switch from the pound to the euro would present.

Mr Brown then avoided any predictions about the future, insisting that the Government's wait-and-see position had not changed.

Mr Lilley said: "They know that they cannot win the argument for joining a single currency in the foreseeable future openly, so their policy for the pound is death by a thousand briefings ..."

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## COLUMN ONE

### Weathering the storm of a fishy business

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As quotes go, it is probably one that Michael Fish would rather forget. "Today a woman apparently rang the BBC and said she heard that there was a hurricane on the way," he announced, 10 years ago tomorrow. "But if you are watching, don't worry - there isn't."

Less than 24 hours later, a hurricane tore across the south coast of England in a four-hour frenzy that killed 19 people, ripped up 15 million trees and caused billions of pounds worth of damage.

But on a programme about the night of 15 October, Mr Fish, who is affectionately known as "Mr Polyester" because of his striking taste in suits, now claims that he never said there would not be a hurricane. On *Storm of the Century*, to be broadcast on Radio 2 tonight, Mr Fish says it was the media that got it wrong.

"The woman referred to was talking about a potential hurricane in Florida that had been mentioned in the news. The Met Office got it spectacularly wrong, but I was only one of the messengers," he says in the interview. Bearing in mind the number of times the television clip has been replayed, this would be a tough argument to win at the best of times. The footage is currently being shown to flag a television programme about the storm. But Mr Fish has another problem - his Nemesis, in the shape of the person behind that fateful telephone call, has also come back to haunt him.

The woman who made the call is Anita Hart, 46, from north-west London. It was her son, Gaon, who, while doing meteorology as part of a geography degree, compiled the weather forecast that prompted Mrs Hart's call.

In a "join-the-dots" weather prediction, of a kind he often made for his parents, he had warned them not to go on a planned caravan trip to Wales after seeing what looked like a severe storm approaching. They reacted with disbelief, thinking that anything so serious would surely have been noted elsewhere, and decided to call the BBC. Hence the fateful call, he says, to Michael Fish.

Mrs Hart is currently travelling and could not comment yesterday. But Gaon Hart, now a

lawyer, said the pair were astonished to hear of Mr Fish's denial.

"My mother actually spoke to Michael Fish because she called the BBC and was accidentally put through to him. She never mentioned anything about Florida, and nor did he when the forecast went out," Mr Hart, 31, said yesterday.

"It's coincidental indeed that he happens to get a phone call about one hurricane and another in Florida on the same day," he observed. "It just doesn't add up." His mother, he said, had even become an answer to a Trivial Pursuit question, in an American version of the game. All things considered, he could find little explanation for why Mr Fish had suddenly decided to speak out.

"I think he's realised that it's going to haunt him for the rest of his days. I don't want to be nasty - perhaps he legitimately doesn't remember... But it's on the record and it did happen," Mr Hart said that neither he nor his mother wished Mr Fish any ill-will, despite the obvious disparities between what they and the weatherman say happened.

"My mum's going to find it amusing. She finds it all very amusing. In fact, she feels sorry for him."

Whatever the truth, there is one possible explanation for Mr Fish's apparent keenness to separate his professional image from those notorious quotes. In June it was reported that the weatherman had been recruited by Florida meteorologists to help spot hurricanes threatening Miami. He was said to be part of a new "co-operation pact" between the Meteorological Office in Bracknell, Berkshire, and the Florida authorities, which are keen to deploy both British supercomputers and staff expertise.

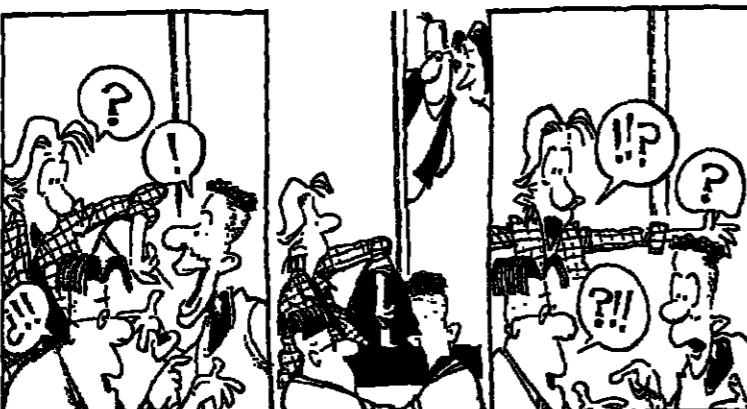
Michael Fish could not be reached to comment last night.

— Jojo Moyes

#### CONTENTS

Leading stories	3	Visual Arts	18
Ulster talks	5	Features	19
Home news	6	Letter, Leaders	20
Technology	8	Comment	21
Environment	9	Obituaries	22
Home news	10	Business	23-27
Middle East	12	Sport	28-32
World news	13	Crossword	The Eye, 9
European news	14	Weather	The Eye, 10
Health news	15	TV & Radio	The Eye, 11-12

#### ZITS



## PEOPLE



ANDREW BLAIBERMAN

### Spare teddy bear wins £2,000 for author

Andy Blackford, above, winner of *The Independent* and Scholastic Children's Books Story of the Year competition, yesterday received a £2,000 prize for his winning entry *Spare Bear*.

Mr Blackford, 47, wrote his book after "downshifting" last year from a career in advertising to pursue his writing. He is the author of five published works, including a biography of Tyneside rock group The Animals. He has always enjoyed writing for children, but it was the arrival of his third child two years ago and the "jail sentence" of "the prospect of having to read and re-read the same bland and formulaic books for years" that prompted *Spare Bear*, the story of a "spare" teddy bear, bought for a child, that lies languishing in a cupboard, and then has to cope with feelings of both happiness and guilt when his bear rival is incapacitated, bringing him into the fold.

ML Greenall and Nadya Smith, as runners up in the competition, each won £500. Ms Greenall, 67, has painted and drawn all her life. Her *Harry*

*the Street Pigeon* tells the story of a pigeon who decides to stand up to a shop owner.

Nadya Smith's *Joe and the Lion* tells the story of Joe, bullied for being black and wearing glasses, who undergoes a transformation upon seeing a brave lion at the zoo. As in her two collections of short stories, *Will You Come on Wednesday* and *Imran's Secret*, the 70-year-old former Birmingham teacher draws on her experience in mainly Asian schools to explore the particular growing pains that children of ethnic minorities suffer.

The Story of the Year Competition has been running for five years, and this year attracted more than 2,000 entries. The stories were narrowed down to a final 10, all of which have been printed in a *Story of the Year 5* anthology to be published by Scholastic Children's Books in the autumn. Pupils from 10 schools read the shortlisted stories, and, along with a panel of seven judges, helped choose the winner.

— Jojo Moyes

### Dempster judged 'inept' over libel against baron

Nigel Dempster, the *Daily Mail*'s gossip columnist, was labelled "inept" by a High Court judge yesterday and fined £10,000 for contempt of court for repeating a libel against millionaire Steven Bentink.

Mr Dempster's employer, Associated Newspapers, publisher of the *Daily Mail*, was also fined £25,000 and faces costs estimated at £20,000. The fines come on top of £50,000 paid into court for Baron Bentink in settlement of the original 1995 libel.

Judge Richard Walker ruled that Mr Dempster (right) and the newspaper were in contempt of court for breaching an undertaking made in 1995 not to repeat the claim that Baron Bentink had been mean to his estranged wife.

The newspaper argued that no breach had occurred because the words complained of in the second item did not amount to an allegation of meanness. But the judge ruled yesterday that the sec-

ond article did allege meanness on the part of Baron Bentink, although on a "lesser scale" than in the first, and that its publication was a breach of the undertaking.

Judge Walker said he was not satisfied that Mr Dempster had wilfully and deliberately broken the undertaking and concluded that his conduct in publishing the item may have been attributable to "ineptitude and negligence". Otherwise, he said, the sentence would have been stiffer.

Mr Dempster left the court without comment but Baron Bentink said "My only regret is that there was not a token sojourn at Her Majesty's pleasure which might have had a more calming effect on future publications."

— Paul McCann

### Controversial drugs tsar appointed

A controversial chief constable will be appointed today as the national drugs "tsar".

Keith Hellawell, Chief Constable of West Yorkshire, will become the UK Anti-Drugs Coordinator while his deputy will be Michael Trace, the head of the Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust (Rapt).

The Government has opted for two men with very different backgrounds to help straddle the different sides of the drugs debate and to share the workload.

Mr Hellawell, 56, a spokesman for the Association of Chief Police Officers, has caused

controversy by talking about relaxing laws on cautioning people caught in possession of cannabis. He has proposed greater use of rehabilitation, rather than punishment, for drug abusers, and is keen to develop the American system of specialist drug courts. However, he rejects the legalisation of cannabis.

He also sparked a debate on prostitution when he recently revealed to *The Independent* that he

rejects the legalisation of cannabis.

He also sparked a debate on prostitution when he recently revealed to *The Independent* that he

rejects the legalisation of cannabis.

— Jason Bennett

## UPDATE

### POLITICS

#### New MPs' radical image fades

Their arrival was meant to herald the start of a fresh, modernising era in the House of Commons. But a survey has revealed that the 1997 intake of new MPs shows no more inclination to radically change the place than their predecessors did.

The *Parliamentary House Magazine* reports that while almost half the MPs elected for the first time in May would like to change the Palace of Westminster, as many want better offices as much as a new kind of politics. The magazine wrote to the 253 new members and received replies from 192. Some complained about the "museum-like" atmosphere, but just as many said they liked the sense of history about the place. Only three thought the debates too adversarial, but 27 said there was too much paperwork.

One said what he really wanted was "an office with a window please".

The authors, Professor Philip Norton, from the University of Hull, and Austin Mitchell, long-standing Labour MP for Great Grimsby, said the new MPs did not seem to be basking after major changes.



### LIFESTYLE

#### Gypsies lose out in health stakes

Gypsies and travellers are among the least healthy people in Britain and have little access to NHS services, new research claims today.

Their record of life expectancy, infant mortality, accidents and chronic diseases was significantly worse than that of house-dwellers, according to Dr Derek Dawes, a lecturer in housing policy at the University of Bristol, who argues in a new book that the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act has worsened the already comparatively poor health of travelling people. Gypsies and travellers were unable to register with GPs, leading to an increased incidence of chronic disease among children and adults, as well as poor ante-natal care and little health education. Dental health was at the level of "almost criminal neglect", Dr Dawes said.

• "Gypsies, travellers and the health service: A study in inequality", is available from The Policy Press, University of Bristol.

### SOCIETY

#### Invest in children, says Barnardo's

Failing to invest in children costs Britain a fortune, according to a report released today.

Poverty, family breakdown, crime and violence later in life could be reduced if the Government supported children while they were young, said the children's charity Barnardo's. Its report, *Today and Tomorrow: Investing in our Children*, highlights an American programme called High/Scope which has shown how early education for disadvantaged children can have a major impact on their futures; children following the programme are more likely to go on to higher education, find jobs, and enjoy higher earnings than those who do not. The scheme also resulted in lower rates of crime, benefit claims and teenage pregnancy, the report stated. "Investing in the early years works," Roger Singleton, Barnardo's chief executive, said.

• "Today and Tomorrow: Investing in our Children", Barnardo's Childcare Publications, Barnardo's Trading Estate, Paycocke Road, Basildon, SS14 3DR. £7.50

— Glenda Cooper

### TOURIST RATES

Australia (dollars)	2.12	Italy (lira)	2,722
Austria (schillings)	19.42	Japan (yen)	193.57
Belgium (francs)	57.10	Malta (lira)	0.61
Canada (\$)	2.18	Netherlands (guilders)	3.11
Cyprus (pounds)	0.81	Norway (kroner)	11.14
Denmark (kroner)	10.59	Portugal (escudos)	279.21
France (francs)	9.28	Spain (pesetas)	227.77
Germany (marks)	2.77	Sweden (kroner)	12.02
Greece (drachmai)	439.03	Turkey (lira)	1.31
Hong Kong (\$)	12.16	Switzerland (francs)	272.59
Ireland (pounds)	1.07	USA (\$)	1.58

Source: Thomas Cook

Rates for indicative purposes only

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by Chris Priestley

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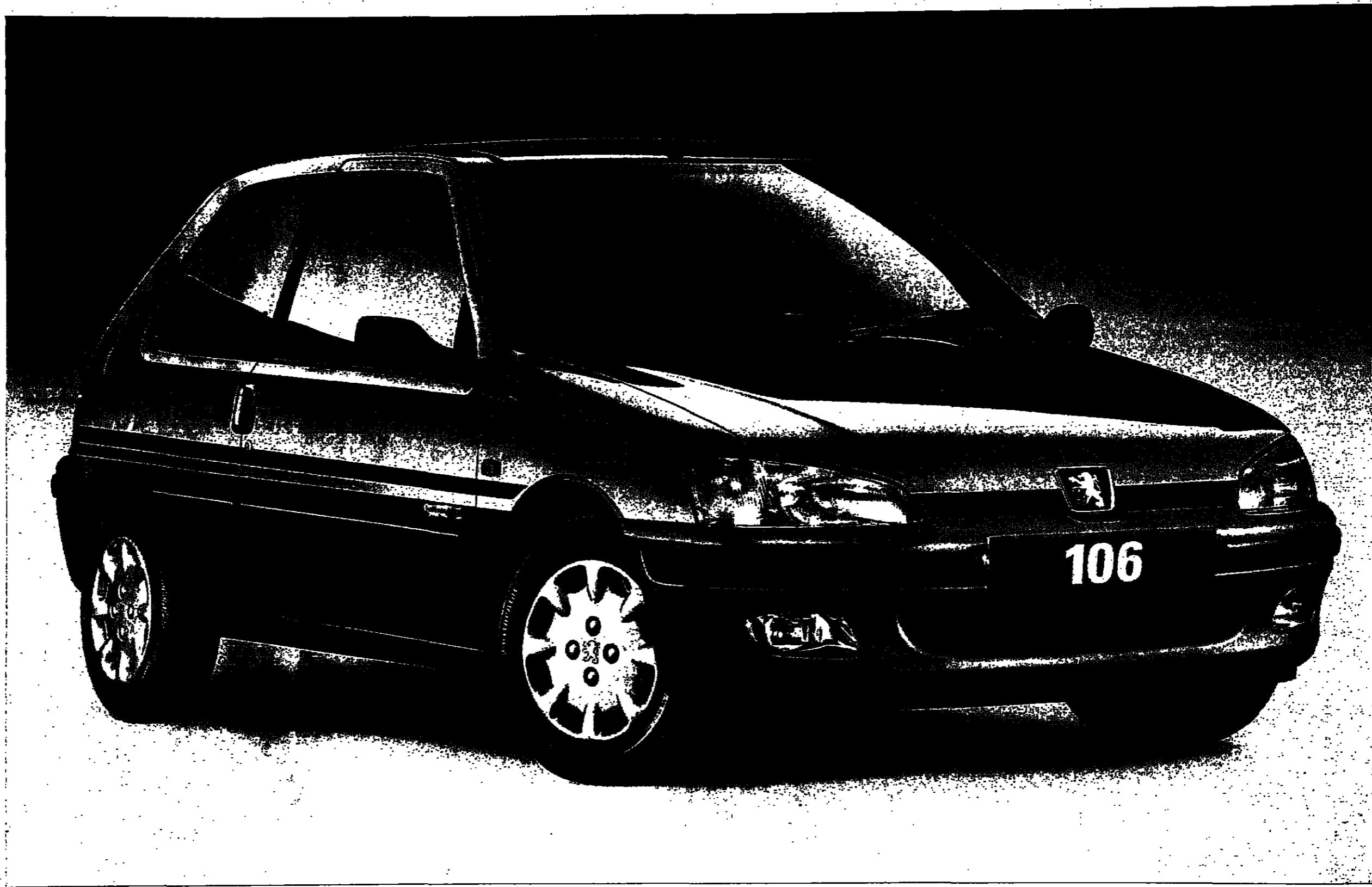
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# 5/ULSTER TALKS

## Blair barracked after historic handshake with Adams

Tony Blair was jostled and jeered by loyalists after shaking hands with Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams during a visit to Belfast. It was, says David McKittrick, Ireland Correspondent, a day which combined the promise of new beginnings with a sharp reminder of the persistence of conflict.

Tony Blair encountered both the rough and the smooth in Belfast yesterday. The smooth part came with what was by all accounts a cordial meeting with Gerry Adams. Martin McGuinness and other republicans in the inter-party talks at Stormont.

When Mr Adams told him that he hoped he would be "the last British prime minister with jurisdiction in Ireland," he did so in a non-confrontational tone. When Mr Blair replied that "there is an opportunity and we've got to seize it because if we don't see it we may not see it again in my lifetime," the Sinn Fein leader seems to have been impressed.

The civilities which accompanied this, the first hand-

shake between a prime minister and a Sinn Fein leader since Lloyd George met Michael Collins, were however in sharp contrast to the rough treatment Mr Blair received an hour later in an east Belfast shopping centre.

"Traitor," they shouted. "Your hands are covered in blood," they barracked him. The loyalist protesters were wailing, some wearing rubber gloves to show what they thought of the Blair-Adams handshake. "Shame," they shouted. One man kept up a metronomic chant: "Scum - scum - scum." A woman yelled: "You are contaminated, I'll not shake hands with you."

The Prime Minister took refuge in a bank before the security people got together to escort him away from it all.

David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist leader, blamed the media, saying people had been "infuriated and goaded" by exaggerated reports of the significance of the occasion. He added: "I disapprove of what has happened but let's put the responsibility where it belongs."

The handshakes took place behind closed doors at the Stormont talks building.

Afterwards Mr Blair said: "I treated Gerry Adams and the members of Sinn Fein in the same way I treat any human being.

What is important in the situation here in Northern Ireland is that we do treat each other as human beings. Everybody who is here has got to be committed to the principle of non-violence - anybody who departs from this will not be in these talks."

Mr Blair also held short meetings with the seven other parties, apart from Sinn Fein, who are in the talks. While discussions are still in their early stages, the British and Irish governments hope that today will bring the opening of substantive negotiations on what is seen as the most sensitive part of the talks, the question of Northern Ireland's future relations with the rest of Ireland.

John Hume, leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, said of Mr Blair: "The very fact that he is coming to visit our towns and cities has strengthened the will of our people for lasting peace in an enormous way."



Tony Blair is escorted through angry loyalist protesters at an east Belfast shopping centre shortly after meeting Gerry Adams. Photograph: Pacemaker

## Lloyd George had never been quite so excited



Michael Collins: Described PM as 'obnoxious'

The last occasion when a British prime minister formally met leaders of Sinn Fein was in 1921. David McKittrick on the historical precedents for yesterday's handshake.

At their four one-to-one meetings in 1921, Eamon de Valera treated the British prime minister, Lloyd George, to extensive displays of his

legendary gifts for verbosity and ambiguity. His lengthy account of England's historic wrongs against Ireland left the prime minister, by one account, "white and exhausted".

Nonetheless, Lloyd George was quite taken by the republican leader, summing him up to a confidant as "a nice man, honest, astonishingly little vocabulary, wants to settle but afraid of his followers".

The PM had made special preparations for the meeting, which could hardly be de-

scribed as subtle, had the cabinet room decked out with a huge map of the world emphasising the large areas which then belonged to the British empire. De Valera, however, refused to be impressed. In their talks Lloyd George could get few straight answers.

Their discussions ended without agreement but later in the year a full republican negotiating team arrived in London, this time dominated by Michael Collins.

The two men did not get on, Collins finding Lloyd George "particularly obnoxious". The PM originally judged the republican to be "undoubtedly a considerable person", but he later dismissed him as "an uneducated, rather stupid man".

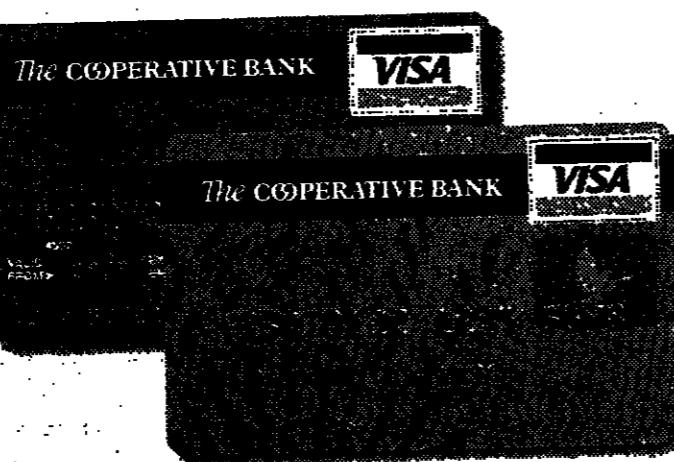
A problem arose when some British ministers did not wish to shake hands with the Sinn Fein delegation, regarding them as murderers. To deal with this Lloyd George alone shook hands with the republicans. He then introduced them to his ministers across the cabinet table, the broad expanse of which made handshakes impossible.



Lloyd George: Felt Collins was 'a rather stupid man'

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## Banks promises action as Rome forces football violence back on the agenda

After Rome, the FA fears of further violence at the World Cup. While Tony Banks promised a clampdown on hooligans and "unofficial" ticket agents, Ian Burrell says fans are already planning their trips to France.

Despite evidence that many English fans were the innocent victims of thoughtless Italian policing at Saturday's match in Rome, the violence has forced football hooliganism back on to the political agenda.

Tony Banks, the sports minister, said yesterday that the courts were not doing enough to stop convicted thugs travel-

ling abroad. "Officials ... are now reviewing the scheme. Because quite clearly, if we are not using the powers that we have to stop these people travelling then frankly we are not doing our job properly," he said.

Earlier Mr Banks said that, although he blamed Italian fans for starting the violence, he was concerned at the role of

what he called "so-called responsible" ticket agencies which sold English fans tickets obtained from Italian sources.

"We are going to have to look very carefully at whether this should be permitted," he said.

Keith Prowse International, which sold packages for the game to 950 England fans, said it supplied British and Italian

police with the names and addresses of all the supporters. "We have done nothing wrong. In fact, the Italian authorities even told us how well we had done everything," it said.

France is the next potential battle zone and yesterday travel companies reported an immediate demand for packages to the finals in the summer.

Richard Brierty, chief executive of the Association of British Tour Operators to France, said: "I would have thought all operators interested in offering the package will look at any [ticketing] source they can provide if it is legal and above board." Yesterday the Italian judicial authorities were dealing with 31 English fans arrested at the weekend. Andrew Jordan, 38, a manager, from St Albans, Hertfordshire; Fernando Puertoano, 31, a psychiatric nurse from Brentwood, Essex; and Nigel Andrews, 39, from Cradley Heath, West Midlands admitted knocking a policeman unconscious and received eight-month suspended jail sentences. The same

sentence was imposed on Patrick Brogan, 30, of Aldershot, Hampshire, who admitted head-butting a policeman. In Ireland yesterday, Stephen Smith, 31, from Scunthorpe, was banned from the country after admitting throwing seats at Irish fans when England played in Dublin in 1995.

Italy draw Russia, page 32

## Surgeons accused over high child death rate

A senior consultant is alleged to have continued to perform complex heart surgery on babies although the death rate for his patients was nearly four times the national average. Kathy Marks reports on one of the most significant General Medical Council cases of recent years.

Between 1990 and 1994, nine of the fifteen babies who underwent "hole in the heart" operations at the hands of James Wisheart died. The mortality rate, according to Roger Henderson, QC, counsel for the GMC, was "unacceptably high."

The charge was made at the start of a marathon disciplinary hearing against three doctors accused of serious professional misconduct relating to babies operated on four congenital heart defects at the Bristol Royal Infirmary between 1988 and 1995.

The case against Mr Wisheart and Jarnadan Dhasmana, both paediatric cardiac surgeons, and Dr John Roylance, former chief executive of the United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust, is expected to last well into next year and to hear evidence from up to 40 families. It will be followed by a Government inquiry that could lead to changes in the way that surgical practice is regulated.

Mr Henderson said that Mr Wisheart should have realised by 1993 that his death rate was up to 54 per cent, compared with a national level of 13.9 per cent. His rate was "comparatively disastrous," Mr Henderson said.

Mr Wisheart and Mr Dhasmana, the latter of whom specialised in "switching" operations to unscramble major arteries, are alleged to have continued with their

work despite concerns expressed to them by colleagues. Mr Wisheart, who was also the hospital's medical director and is now retired, is also said to have misled parents about the risks of their children dying or suffering brain damage. Dr Roylance is accused of failing to heed the concerns of other consultants and prevent further operations going ahead.

Mr Henderson said lessons had been learned in Bristol and the provision of paediatric heart services had radically improved in the past two years. "I appreciate that these words may be of little solace to parents of children who have died or suffered brain damage," he added. "It is clear that emotions run high in many quarters."

Of Mr Dhasmana's infant patients, 20 out of 38 died between 1988 and 1995. Mr Henderson said that no one doubted the dedication of either doctor, but they should have been aware of how poorly their results compared with the national picture. "They had to stop operating if too many babies were dying," he said.

Mr Henderson said that Dr Stephen Bonsin, a consultant anaesthetist, had played a key role in raising the alert about the two surgeons. "He may be portrayed by others as an rather unattractive whistle-blower," he said. "The fact remains that it was and is the overriding duty of a doctor to safeguard the interests of patients, even if that means stopping a colleague or blowing the whistle on a colleague's performance or conduct."

Mr Henderson said experts would tell the GMC that a number of children "would be alive today" if a more experienced surgeon had operated on Mr Dhasmana's patients. At one time, two babies out of three were dying after being operated on by him, more than six times the accepted level.

All three doctors deny misconduct. The case continues tomorrow.

## John Denver dies in crash

Often scorned by the critics, doted on by fans who bought his records by the million, country singer John Denver died when the small aircraft he was flying plummeted into the Pacific. Denver, a licensed pilot, crashed shortly after take-off from Monterey Airport, south of San Francisco, on Sunday night. His single-engine aircraft was described by local police as "experimental", and witnesses said it dropped suddenly into the water from about 500 feet.

Denver, 53, became one of the biggest recording artists in the United States with a country boy image and songs that were irresistibly catchy. His allure was difficult to define but it served him well. "He was never anything but John Denver. He didn't accommodate new trends," said his friend Pierre Cossette.

Born Henry John Deutschendorf Jr, son of an Air Force pilot, he took his name from

the capital of Colorado, the state where he lived. His big break came in 1969 when one of his songs, "Leaving on a Jet Plane", was turned into a hit by Peter, Paul and Mary. He began performing his own compositions, like "Sunshine on my Shoulders", and "Thank God I'm a Country Boy". Eight of his albums went platinum with sales of more than a million and John Denver's Greatest Hits has sold 10 million world-wide.

He is best known for "Amen's Song", written for his first wife. Its lyrics were typical of his folk-pop tunes and their simple, Western themes: "You fill up my senses, like a night in the forest, like the mountains in spring time, like a walk in the rain." The World Wide Web site for his fan club yesterday carried the message: "Though the singer is silent, there is still truth in his song."

- Tim Cornwell  
Obituary, page 22

## 13 MUSICIANS WHO DIED IN PLANE CRASHES

Glenn Miller - 1944  
Buddy Holly  
The Big Bopper  
Ritchie Valens - all together in 1959  
Patsy Cline - 1963  
Jim Reeves - 1964  
Otis Redding - 1967  
Ronnie van Zant

Steve Gaines  
Cassie Gaines (all Lynyrd Skynyrd) - 1977  
Rick Nelson - 1985  
Stevie Ray Vaughan - 1990 (plus three members of Eric Clapton's entourage in a helicopter crash)  
John Denver - 1997



History man: Michael Foot after speaking at the dedication of newly restored memorials to radical reformers and to Robert Owen, founder of the Co-operative Movement, in Kensal Green, north-west London. Photograph: David Rose

## High winds ground Saturn mission as court bid fails

Court battles launched by environmentalists failed to stop the Cassini-Huygens mission to Saturn from getting off the launch pad yesterday. Instead, it was nature that held up the start of its 2.2 billion-mile journey.

High winds at 45,000ft meant the 182ft-high rocket was grounded by scientists at mission control in Florida but it still has a launch window extending to 15 November in order to complete its rendezvous with Titan, one of Saturn's moons, in seven years.

The legal challenges came from environmentalists concerned about radiation contamination should the rocket, which has a nuclear power source, crash, spilling plutonium into the atmosphere. They failed, and scientists continued to try to reassure them yesterday that the odds of any leakage were 1,400-1 against.

Technical hitches involving batteries and a computer contributed to yesterday's delay. However, the winds were above acceptable levels, according to mission control. The next suitable launch opportunity is tomorrow morning.

— Steve Boggan

## £15m for Maxwell legal aid

The legal aid bill for defence lawyers in the Maxwell fraud trial totalled £14.15m, it was revealed yesterday. Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, gave the figures as he defended government plans to cap the legal aid fees paid in big criminal trials.

Lord Irvine, giving evidence to the Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, said that just 1 per cent of cases accounted for 40 per cent of the criminal legal aid paid out in the Crown Courts.

"These are very big figures indeed. The very, very high fees that in some cases are charged — I think there is a very powerful argument that we move in certain categories to fixed price contracting." However, he acknowledged the Government could not force any lawyer to work for fees they considered unacceptable.

## First woman for national park

One of the last bastions of male dominance in the public service is beginning to crumble. The heavily bearded world of national parks is about to get its first woman chief executive.

Heather Hancock, a 32-year-old who helped set up the Department of National Heritage and the Millennium Commission, has been appointed national park officer for the Yorkshire Dales. She beat 160 other applicants to head the park authority.

— Stephen Goodwin

## Soldier escapes Cyprus jail

A British soldier escaped a jail sentence yesterday when he was fined £750 for assaulting two tourists outside a Cyprus disco.

King's Riflemen Roger Bell, 26, from Liverpool, walked from court a free man after the judge decided not to impose a custodial sentence in order to save the soldier's army career.

Any type of custodial sentence or even a suspended one would have meant Bell, a storekeeper with the regiment in Cyprus, would have been discharged. Bell faced up to three years in a Cyprus prison after pleading guilty to causing actual bodily harm to English tourists Barry Ford, 23, and a charge of common assault against his girlfriend Claire Harbour, 22, on in August.

## Teacher agency drops demand for top degrees

A target requiring the majority of trainee teachers to hold a top degree has been scrapped. The move emerged as a recruitment drive is launched to remedy a growing shortfall in the profession, says Education Correspondent Lucy Ward.

same qualifications as entrants to other degree programmes. I don't see why we should stand for anything less on that — a weak teacher does more harm than an absent teacher."

The launch will see the unveiling of a £1.5m advertising campaign to boost recruitment, featuring cinema adverts spreading the message: "No one forgets a good teacher."

Applications for courses have dropped sharply as the economic recovery has increased the career options for graduates.

At the end of August, there were 1,433 graduates applying to teach maths in secondary schools, compared with 2,246 in 1994. For science, there were fewer than 3,000 applications compared with 4,000 in 1994.

Amid the efforts to attract high quality new recruits to teaching, local authorities are also seeking government help in removing those not up to standard.

A £1.7m cash pot being considered by ministers will allow schools to pay off bad teachers to remove them from the classroom as early as possible. This follows an approach by Graham Lane, education chairman of the Local Government Association and leader of the local authority employers.

Mr Lane said a fund was needed to allow schools to implement a new agreement on fast-track procedures for removing incompetent teachers without a loss of momentum. No dismissal should take longer than two terms in total, the agreement says.

## Teachers' red tape rage

Teachers believe they are wasting nearly three hours a day on paperwork and non-teaching activities, says a survey released yesterday.

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers, which carried out the survey, said that the Government's policy of target-setting was one of the new initiatives which threatened to submerge teachers in paperwork.

Target-setting is central to the Government's efforts to raise standards. Each school will set goals which will contribute to national targets on which the Government will be judged in five years' time.

But Mr de Gruchy said that target setting was becoming absurd. In one unnamed school teachers had to write reports on children every two weeks in all subjects. They then have to describe what each child is going to achieve in another two weeks, and then describe how they are going to move

each child from where they are to where they want them to be."

The union's survey of nearly 12,000 teachers shows that they think around 15 hours of their 51-hour week are wasted on jobs that take them out of the classroom.

Teachers were asked to place a value on each of seven areas of work. Only teaching, lesson preparation and marking scored highly. They thought contact with governors was largely a waste of time and that communication with parents, except when a child had misbehaved, was often unproductive. Marketing, teachers said, was the biggest waste of time.

They suggested that the Office for Standards in Education, which supervises inspections, was one of the main reasons for administrative overload.

Union leaders accept that teachers must continue to carry out some of the tasks which they do not value highly but believe red tape could still be cut. — Judith Judd

## New powers urged to oust rogue police

Police chiefs last night called for sweeping powers to root out corrupt officers. The Association of Chief Police Officers said measures were needed to get rid of the "tiny minority" of policemen who had no place in the service.

In evidence presented to the Commons Home Affairs Select Committee Britain's top-ranking police chiefs called for a lower standard of proof in disciplinary proceedings. Acpo said the test should be that the case is proved "on the balance of probabilities" rather than the present standard of "beyond all reasonable doubt", which is

the same as for a criminal prosecution. The chairman of Acpo's discipline and complaints sub-committee, Peter Bensley, the Chief Constable of Lincolnshire, told MPs that the current situation was out of step with modern management practice.

"I have less powers than the manager of a large business," he said. "You are expecting me to manage an organisation. Just give us the tools to do the job."

He stressed that the new powers were needed to deal with the most serious cases where officers were alleged to be involved in corruption or crime.

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# FULFILLING OUR COMMITMENT

The Swiss banks are achieving significant progress towards resolving the issue of dormant World War II-era accounts in a fair and open manner.

Our major initiatives to date include:

## ■ Identifying Dormant Accounts

*The Swiss banks are committed to identifying all accounts that could have belonged to victims of Nazi persecution.*

In addition to conducting their own search for dormant accounts, the Swiss banks are providing complete access and assistance to hundreds of forensic auditors working for the Independent Committee of Eminent Persons, chaired by Paul A. Volcker and comprised of prominent Jewish and Swiss leaders.

## ■ Helping Needy Holocaust Survivors

*The Swiss banks are committed to helping needy Holocaust survivors.*

Earlier this year, the three largest Swiss banks, Credit Suisse, Swiss Bank Corporation and UBS, contributed 100 million Swiss francs (\$70 million) to establish a special fund for victims of the Holocaust. Other Swiss banks and Swiss industry have since contributed an additional 80 million Swiss francs (\$55 million).

With a pledge of 100 million Swiss francs from the Swiss National Bank the fund now has a total of 280 million Swiss francs (\$194 million). The Fund's board consists of representatives of Jewish organisations and private Swiss citizens and is chaired by Rolf Bloch, leader of the Swiss Jewish community. Proceeds from the Fund will soon be distributed to Holocaust survivors in Eastern Europe.

## ■ Publishing Dormant Accounts

*The Swiss banks are committed to publishing dormant accounts.*

In July, the Swiss banks published an initial list of World War II-era dormant accounts of non-Swiss customers in newspapers around the world and established an Internet site. The Swiss banks also established five international contact offices staffed by representatives of the accounting organisation of Ernst & Young which was engaged to help rightful owners file claims.

## ■ Creating An Expedited Payment Process

*The Swiss banks are committed to returning assets to their rightful owners quickly, easily and without cost to claimants.*

To accomplish this objective, the banks have established a cost-free, expedited payment process, which is being supervised by an independent, international panel operating under relaxed standards of proof. Claims from the July list are now being processed and payments will be made shortly.

This progress demonstrates the seriousness of the Swiss banks which are among the first to address and to resolve this complex issue.

## New Information Available

On October 29, the following World War II-era accounts will be published:

- Dormant passbooks and savings accounts of *non-Swiss* citizens.
- Dormant accounts of *non-Swiss* citizens that have been identified as a result of the Swiss banks' ongoing search.
- Dormant accounts belonging to *Swiss* citizens.

## Call Our Contact Offices

If you wish to review these lists, please fill out the Information Kit Request Form and mail it to the nearest Ernst & Young contact office listed below. You will receive an Information Kit that includes the lists, fully describes the claims process, and explains how to file a claim.

- Ernst & Young LLP, Dormant Accounts  
P.O. Box 1880, Radio City Station, New York,  
NY 10101-1880, U.S.A., Tel. +1 212 344 0610
- Kost Levary and Forer, Dormant Accounts  
2 Kremenetski Street, Tel Aviv, Israel 67899,  
Tel. +972 3 623 2559
- ATAG Ernst & Young, Dormant Accounts  
Aeschengraben 9, P.O. Box 2149, CH-4002 Basel,  
Switzerland, Tel. +41 61 272 08 11
- Ernst & Young Kft, Dormant Accounts  
1146 Budapest, Hermina út 17, Hungary, Tel. +36 1 343 5117
- Ernst & Young, Dormant Accounts  
The Ernst & Young Building, G. P.O. Box 2646, Sydney,  
N.S.W. 2001, Australia, Tel. +61 2 9248 5736

If you have already received an Information Kit from Ernst & Young, an updated kit will be mailed to you automatically.

## Use Our Freephone Number Or Web Site

If you have any questions or need assistance, please call the following Freephone number:  
**0800-731-0451.**

You can also search for dormant accounts and review other pertinent information at the Swiss Bankers Association's Internet site:

<http://www.dormantaccounts.ch>

### Information Kit Request Form

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Street \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please specify preferred language:

- English    Yiddish    Hebrew    German    Spanish  
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 Portuguese    Romanian    Russian    Bulgarian    Dutch

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## Wanted: computer experts. Name your salary

A computer services group is resorting to innovative tactics in response to the chronic shortage of computer specialists in the UK. Sameena Ahmad discovers that the demand for experts means some salaries have doubled in the past two years.

Logica has just opened its first walk-in careers desk in London, inviting people who read its advertisements on London's underground trains to come in off the street, learn about the company and set up an interview.

A spokesman for the company said the office near Oxford Circus had been open just five days, but has already attracted 100 people, 60 of whom have been invited for formal interview.

The spokesman said the company has been staggered by the success of the venture: "It's about being smart. Of course we advertise in papers like everyone else, but we thought how could we stand out from other IT companies looking for staff?" he said.

"This has proved incredibly popular. We had in a highly qualified programmer from the Middle East in the office, who happened to spot the advertisement on his way into London from Heathrow. He is being interviewed next week."

Logica said the advertisements were targeted at graduates and people looking to learn about IT as well as IT professionals. Given the initial success, the group may open more desks outside London.

The company is also offering existing staff bonuses to introduce new employees. Last year the company recruited a quarter of its new people in the



Logging on: Hopeful job candidates at Logica's drop-in interview centre just off Oxford Street in central London

Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

Netherlands this way.

Shortage of skilled IT staff has become the key factor limiting the growth of IT companies in the UK. Logica was forced to post a profits warning in June after it said it had failed to recruit computer staff quickly enough.

The problem is soaring salaries, driven by the growing reliance of business on IT and exploding demand for IT specialists to solve the millennium crisis and the possible introduction of the single currency.

The combination of wage inflation, averaging a staggering 20 per cent a year, plus

growth in the number of short term contracts has led to a sharp increase in staff turnover in the IT industry with computer buffs chasing the best paying contracts.

Richard Holloway, who writes the IT bible, the Holloway Report, said that computer staff shortages were becoming critical.

"I have heard of companies who have staff turnover rates of up to 30 per cent. It is just appalling given the costs of recruiting new staff. Demand for IT - bank loyalty cards, the Internet, electronic trading - is phenomenal and growing."

It is not just information technology experts who have seen their salaries rocket over the last few years.

A shortage of staff in the financial world means employers are having to pay out over the odds to secure the best people.

With tax departments struggling to find recruits, salaries have increased by 10 per cent in the last three months alone.

A head of tax working for a FTSE 100 company can earn £160,000 today compared with £144,000 in July.

Banks are also paying out more than they were a few months ago. A head of derivatives operations in a major bank can earn £105,000 compared with £98,000 three months ago.

But the most dramatic increase in demand

has been for quantitative analysts who assess the financial risk of a company. Last year a PhD quantitative analyst with three years' experience could earn £70,000. This year their earning potential has shot up to £120,000.

In information technology, figures are comparable. A head of IT can now earn £150,000 compared with £125,000 a year ago.

A head of systems development can earn £80,000, compared with £60,000 two years ago. Programme managers can earn £80,000 compared with £40,000 two years ago. A project leader can £65,000 compared to £50,000 a year ago. A junior data base administrator can start on £30,000 compared with £24,000 a year ago.

(Figures: Robert Walters)

— Amanda Kelly

### WHO PROFITS FROM SKILLS SHORTAGE

## Fast-chip revolution for home computers

A new generation of ultra-fast micro chips was launched yesterday.

They will have the processing power of a super-computer but at the cost of today's PCs.

Randeep Ramesh says the new chips could revolutionise home computing

performed will be "significantly improved using the new chip". Mr Dewannain said that the computing power would especially be useful for many "Virtual Reality" applications.

"You could have classroom field trips to the Egyptian pyramids via virtual reality so real children experience the look and feel of an ancient civilisation," said Mr Dewannain.

Another area would be games - already a multi-billion pound global industry. The latest hits, such as Tomb Raider, feature animated figures in 3D but most suffer from being unlife-like.

"This chip will allow for a much more realistic representation. The problem is that at the moment you are far from your computer looking like the scene outside your window," he added.

Mr Dewannain also predicted that with the increased number-crunching power that voice recognition for personal computers would become a reality. "It is a question of separating the real signal from the noise and that needs a powerful computer."

The new chips should be available in the second half of next year. Users will be able to purchase "boards" which can be inserted into conventional systems - most of which use microprocessors like Intel's Pentium chip. The microprocessor is likely to cost between £30 and £60 when produced in bulk.

The technology is developed from processors used in today's mobile phones. Eric Dewannain, Texas' European manager for the Digital Signal Processors, said: "It is like putting a Formula One engine in your family saloon."

The company says that any application that requires a large number of calculations to be

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Restoration drama: Conservationists are worried that Covent Garden is becoming 'tatty' Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

## Cafe society's blot on the townscape

Twenty three years after Covent Garden's fruit and vegetable market moved out, the area has become a victim of its own success. Stephen Goodwin examines a classic case of conservation at odds with commerce.

Aussie bars, canopies of permanent umbrellas and racks of garish waistcoats à la Carnaby Street; it's all too frightful for the Covent Garden Area Trust. The place may have been a market for most of the past 300 years but the Trust believes over-commercialisation is destroying the character of Inigo Jones's piazza.

Some 40 million people a year visit the central London piazza, making it one of the most successful city restorations. But the image of upmarket boutiques is being tarnished by businesses trying to wring every last penny from their patch.

A damning 127-page study by the

Civic Design Partnership warned last week that urgent action is needed if the historic area is not to lose the character which has made it so popular.

Pavement cafés marauding trading space beneath a canopy of permanent umbrellas are among the worst offenders, according to the Trust. Unauthorised stalls, tables and chairs obstruct footways and infiltration by less chic high street names are not far behind.

"It's really starting to look like the lower end of Oxford Street," says Leanne Poley, the Trust's administrator. This disdainful verdict taken in the likes of Sheila's Bar - "Drink your way round the world" - racks of cut-price clothing, and a Pizza Hut next to a Lloyds Bank.

"It's all so tatty ... We get accused of being terribly snobbish, but I don't think it is that. Once you start having all the same old high street people what's the point in coming here? You might as well go to New Malden."

The study, commissioned by the Trust jointly with English Heritage, Westmin-

ster City Council and Guardian Properties, who manage the restored market building, calls recommends better design for pavement cafés, removing obtrusive umbrellas, restoring authentic shop fronts and paving, and banning vehicles. The work would cost £5m.

Way back in mid-Saxon times a thriving trade settlement existed in the area. The piazza, reflecting Inigo Jones' love of the formal market squares of Italy, and St Paul's Church, date from the 17th century. Charles Fowler's neo-classical market building appeared in 1830 and was roofed over in 1872.

The battle of the umbrellas seems destined to run and run. Trevor Davies, director of the Market Cafe, which has 140 seats beneath umbrellas out in the open, says the weather makes large umbrellas a necessity. He accused the conservationists of not listening to the traders: "They want to ban everything in sight without consulting. I used to come here as a kid when the [fruit and veg] market was thriving ... And that's how it should be."

## Britain to lose out over Brent Spar

**Shell's Brent Spar oil storage tank is likely to be scrapped on shore in Norway. The oil giant is now close to deciding on the preferred alternative to dumping the Spar at sea. But Nicholas Schoon, Environment Correspondent, says British yards will be the losers.**

Shell will finally tell the Government what it wants to do with the Spar within the next two or three months, more than two years after Greenpeace's campaign forced the company to abandon its plans to sink the skyscraper-sized structure in the north Atlantic.

Soon after that traumatic event - Shell changed its corporate mind only a couple of hours before the Spar was meant to be scuppered - it began an exhaustive procedure to find a more acceptable alternative. The 14,500-tonne tank had spent two decades storing crude oil in a North Sea field.

At the beginning of this year Shell short-listed six engineering consortia which had put in a variety of bids for bringing the floating structure to shore and re-using or re-cycling it. Each was given £250,000 to carry out detailed planning.

Now each scheme has been analysed for its technical and safety risks, environmental impacts and "societal effects" by the independent Norwegian foundation Det Norske Veritas. A world leader in assessing marine risks, each has been ranked under these different headings. The likely cost of each option has also been

weighed up independently. The results show how expensive recycling is compared with deep-sea dumping, which had been approved by the Government. That would have cost just under £5m.

The cheapest of the consortia's schemes comes in at £11.4m whilst the most expensive would cost £48m. Under that proposal the Brent Spar, currently moored in a Norwegian fjord, would be towed across the North Sea to a yard at Nigg in north-east Scotland, for scrapping.

Heinz Rothermund, managing director of Shell UK exploration and production said: "We are now entering the home straight." The aim was "to find a solution that on balance is at least as good as, or better than, deep-sea disposal".

He gave no clue as to what Shell's final preference would be. But from an analysis of the rankings under safety, risk, environmental impact and cost, it appears that one short-listed scheme to cut up the Brent Spar to build an offshore reef, protecting the East Anglian coastline, has little chance.

The highly ranked options with relatively low costs all involve Norwegian locations. The final choice will probably be between a consortium formed by the Scottish energy company John Wood, based in Aberdeen, and the Norwegian GMC group, and another Norwegian consortium, Kvaerner Seaway Spar Alliance.

Wood-GMC proposes using the Spar cables, then cutting its cylindrical hull into rings to extend a quay in Norway. A Kvaerner Seaway plan to cut it up, either for metal scrap or to be used as a fish farm. Whatever Shell chooses will have to be approved by the government.

## Whale deal links ban and local culls

A global sanctuary for whales - to be supported by the British Government at the International Whaling Commission meeting in Monaco next week - has left environmentalists in turmoil because it would allow coastal whaling.

A steep rise in the number of whales being killed this year by Japan and Norway has led Britain to join an international effort to ban all high seas whaling in return for allowing coastal whaling for the first time in 11 years.

Conservationists, led by Greenpeace, are opposed in principle to coastal whaling. They want a ban on all whaling and an end to trade in whale products. "We support a global sanctuary but not coastal whaling. Whales are no respecters of territorial limits," said a Greenpeace spokesman.

The idea of a sanctuary was put forward by Ireland and amounts to a political trade off in an attempt to regain some of



### Meeting looking

through the eyes  
of someone who  
was too busy to  
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## Violence and sex offences mar 5% fall in crime rate

The number of criminal offences in England and Wales has dropped again, officially figures will show today. But as Jason Bennett, Crime Correspondent, writes, it is not all good news for the Government

rose significantly. The worst areas for violent crime in 1996 were London and the South-east.

Today's police figures are expected to show that the bulk of the 5 per cent drop to about 2.4 million – the equivalent of about 4.75 million a year – are due to reductions in property crimes, such as burglary.

The Conservative Party is bound to seize on the figures as evidence that their "prison works" anti-crime strategy is continuing to prove effective. Michael Howard, the former Home Secretary, was in charge during four of the six months covered this year. The number of crimes have now fallen for four consecutive years, although they have almost doubled since the Tories came into power in 1979.

Recorded crimes fell by about 5 per cent – 125,000 offences – in the first half of the year, it is expected to be announced today. Violent crimes, however, are believed to have risen again in England and Wales.

Offences involving violence rose by 11 per cent to 344,300 cases last year, the biggest increase for seven years. Sexual offences including rape also

The way in which crime statistics are collated are also about to be altered, which is bound to result in a steep increase in the total of recorded offences. Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, is expected to stress the nature of the changes today to avoid having Labour's next crime results being branded a failure.

The way the twice-yearly crime figures are published are being overhauled in an attempt to provide a more accurate total and cut the political controversy that surrounds them. The previous system was criticised for the way a string of offences committed by an offender could end up being counted as just one crime. The new system would be broadly based on the principle of "one crime per victim".



## Army's black and Asian recruitment drive turns to Kitchener for a role model

The Army yesterday unveiled its plan to re-use one of the most radical and successful advertising campaigns of all time to overcome its reputation for racial discrimination.

The enduring image of Lord Kitchener, pointing from a poster with the legend "Your Country Needs You", has been commandeered for an ethnic recruitment drive, which aims to increase by seven-fold the numbers of black and Asian soldiers.

In place of Kitchener, the face of Ghanaian-born Captain "Fiddies" Dalton, looks out at would-be new recruits. A separate poster, designed to attract more Asian troops, features Warrant Officer Ashok Kumar Chauhan.

Both soldiers are members of the Army's ethnic minorities recruitment team, which has been set up amid concerns that only 1.94 per cent of military personnel come from ethnic minorities compared to 5 per cent in the civil service.

The new equal opportunities directive was announced yesterday by General Sir Roger Wheeler, Chief of the General Staff. "There is still a perception in the ethnic communities that the Army is a racist organisation," he said.

"But we now have a long-term programme to improve representation of ethnic minorities and to make sure that everyone in my Army understands that discrimination of any sort is not acceptable."

The campaign, devised by Saatchi and Saatchi, has the backing of the Commission for Racial Equality, whose senior commissioner, Bob Purkiss, said: "I saw a black captain, Paul Ince, leading his troops to victory in Italy. There are many more in our society like him. They just need the opportunity."

The Army has been attacked in the past for ingrained racist attitudes and behaviour, particularly in more elite units.

The Kitchener poster was first used to recruit 100,000 new troops after the disastrous British casualty rates suffered in the early months of the First World War.

Ian Burrell

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## Trainees to get minimum pay

Ministers are insisting that the national minimum wage will apply to jobless youngsters taking part in the New Deal programme – albeit at a lower rate.

As the CBI and the TUC make their submissions to the newly-created Low Pay Commission, the Government has decided that young people will be paid the "normal rate for the job". That means jobless 16- to 24-year-olds on work placements will be paid a special statutory minimum pay limit for all trainees.

The news emerges when the overwhelming majority of submissions to the commission, which will advise the Government on the national minimum wage, call for a "training rate". Employers in particular are concerned that businesses are not discouraged from taking on trainees by being forced to pay the full rate which is expected to come into force at the end of next year or early 1999.

The Government, however, could be heading for a clash over the minimum wage with the CBI, which will today urge the commission to exempt anyone on the Welfare to Work scheme which includes participants in the New Deal.

The CBI will say that a general minimum set in line with the now defunct Wages Council rates – equal to around £3.20 an hour – would be unlikely to cause significant job losses. However, it says a rate of £4.40 – favoured by some unions – would have a "serious impact on jobs and inflation".

A submission from the TUC, revealed last month in *The Independent*, calls for "something above £4 an hour".

— Barry Clement, Labour Editor

## Hirst protesters fined

Five animal activists stormed into a top London restaurant to protest at an exhibition by controversial artist Damien Hirst, a court was told yesterday.

Customers at Quo Vadis, in Covent Garden, run by Marco Pierre-White, were sitting down to dinner by the exhibit – a couple of skinned bull's heads floating in formaldehyde – when "mayhem" broke out, it was claimed. A painting was kicked, a vase broken, and binliners full of rubbish emptied across the floor.

Neil Hanson, 30, of Hertfordshire; Robin Lane, 42, of south-east London, and Brendon McNally, 35, of north London, who admitted using threatening words and behaviour, were fined £200 over the incident last January. Melanie Gatty, 28, and Paul Gravette, 35, of north London, who denied causing affray, were bound over to keep the peace.

## DAILY POEM

### R.I.P. Off

by Edwin Brock

There was a job which went Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday, as though gold watches were hallmark St Peter with an eternal guarantee; there was a bed which went babies, toddlers schoolboys, teenagers and Goodbye; a woman whose waiting went lover, wife, sister, mother, furniture and saint; alcohol, hangovers, trains, tubes, buses and weeks of rain; but there was nothing which ever said This is all there is.

The Daily Poems for the rest of this week commemorate Edwin Brock, who died last month. Brock, who worked as a policeman, journalist and advertising copywriter, published nine collections of poetry, a novel and a memoir. Our choices all come from his *Five Ways to Kill a Man: new and selected poetry*, published by Emitharmon Press (£7.95).

"Renewing  
home...  
in October  
Just look what  
you could save

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Avoca  
ion confus  
So at  
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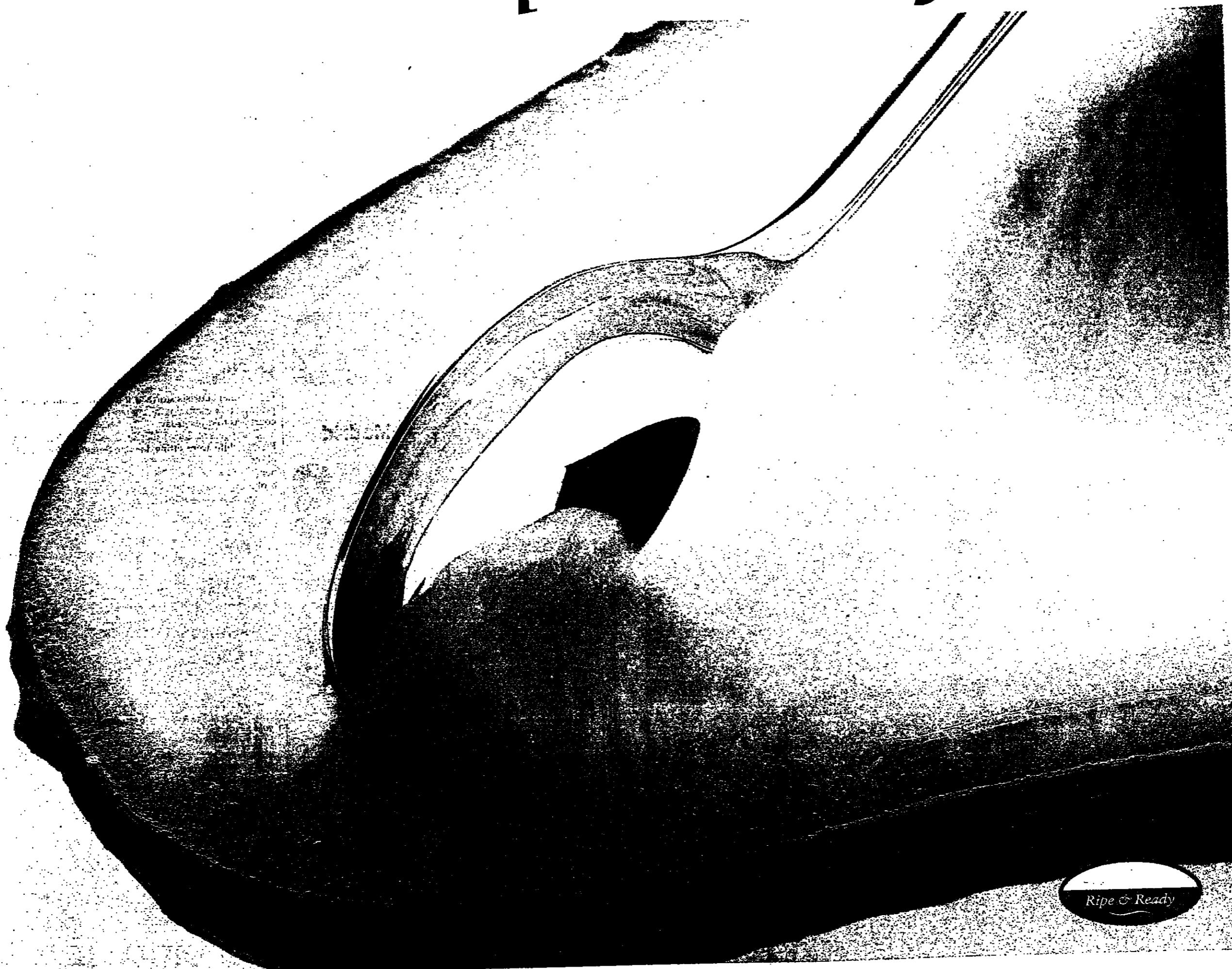
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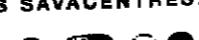
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## Royal visit hits India's raw nerve

The Queen's plan today to visit to Amritsar, scene of the 1919 massacre of Indian nationalists, is embroiled in controversy. Demands for an apology are mounting, while Britain's stand on Kashmir is under attack. Peter Popham, in New Delhi, finds the royal visit is turning into a jamboree of grievances.

KR Narayanan, the journalist-turned-diplomat who is now President of India, came up with a resonant phrase. The exhibition of British Museum treasures entitled "The Enduring Image" which he and the Queen had just opened was, he said, "a refutation of the idea that civilisations clash. It is not civilisations that clash, but barbarisms."

So the war of words that has broken out between the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, and the Indian Prime Minister IK Gujral over Kashmir is a clash of barbarisms. Mr Cook is accused of stirring it in informal chats with Pakistani journalists at a reception in Islamabad, urging Britain's involvement in negotiations over Kashmir's future – but he denies having said anything about Kashmir while in Pakistan.

Then yesterday at a private meeting in Cairo, Mr Gujral supposedly told Egyptian intellectuals that Britain was a "third-rate power", which "has no business to play any role in this issue in any form, since in any case it was responsible for the partition of the country."

Raj buffs will have noticed the cutting choice of the phrase "third-rate power", for it was Viceroy Lord Curzon who declared that if Britain were ever to lose India it would decline to a third-rate power. However,

### Britain defies Libya at Lockerbie hearing

Britain faced Libya across the International Court of Justice yesterday and defended its hunt for the bombers of the New-York-bound Pan Am Flight 103, which crashed over Lockerbie nearly nine years ago, killing all 259 people on board and 11 on the ground. Britain and the United States will present a united front during the eight days of hearings. Both have filed counter-motions rejecting Libya's application and contend that the world court does not have jurisdiction over the case.

### Mugabe defends land grab

President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe said his government would not compensate white farmers for land it planned to take to resettle thousands of peasants. "We are going to take the land and we are not going to pay a cent," Mr Mugabe was quoted as saying. In the past he has threatened to forcibly seize white-owned commercial farms without compensating the owners. The government has earmarked vast tracts of property under a controversial 1992 law which gives it power to forcibly take the land.

### Algeria admits rebel strength

In an unprecedented admission, an Algerian general conceded that the Islamic insurgency has not been crushed. "Terrorism is in no way vanquished," several Algerian newspapers quoted the general in charge of an offensive in the Ouled Alle district as saying. The unnamed general said that 33 insurgents and two leaders had been killed since the start of the operation 28 September. He said that four soldiers were killed and six others wounded.

### Kurds erupt into civil war after peace talks collapse

The civil war between rival Kurdish factions in the mountains of Iraqi Kurdistan again erupted early yesterday, breaking a year-old ceasefire.

The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, backed by Iran, launched an offensive aimed at driving the rival Kurdistan Democratic Party from the strategic town of Shingal.

The war restarted after the failure of a Foreign Office conference between leaders of the two parties in London last week. An attack by Jalal Talabani, leader of the PUK, on the same positions last year led Massoud Barzani, leader of the KDP, to call in the Iraqi army.

The KDP said in a statement that the PUK launched a "major offensive" against it, break-

ing the ceasefire brokered by the US, Britain and Turkey. The PUK confirmed the clashes, but said it was acting defensively.

Mr Talabani's attack has been joined by other enemies of Mr Barzani, such as the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), and Turkish Kurd guerrillas, whom he has been fighting in alliance with the Turkish army during its periodic invasions of Iraqi Kurdistan. His aim is to force Mr Barzani to evacuate his headquarters at Saladin.

If he does, Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi leader, may intervene. If President Saddam were to engage in a prolonged intervention, President Bill Clinton would be under pressure to use US airpower.

— Patrick Cockburn



Activists from the Leftist Party of India clashing with police during protests in New Delhi yesterday against the Queen's visit to India. Today the Queen will lay a wreath at Jallianwala Bagh, scene of a massacre by British troops of Indian civilians.

Photograph: AP

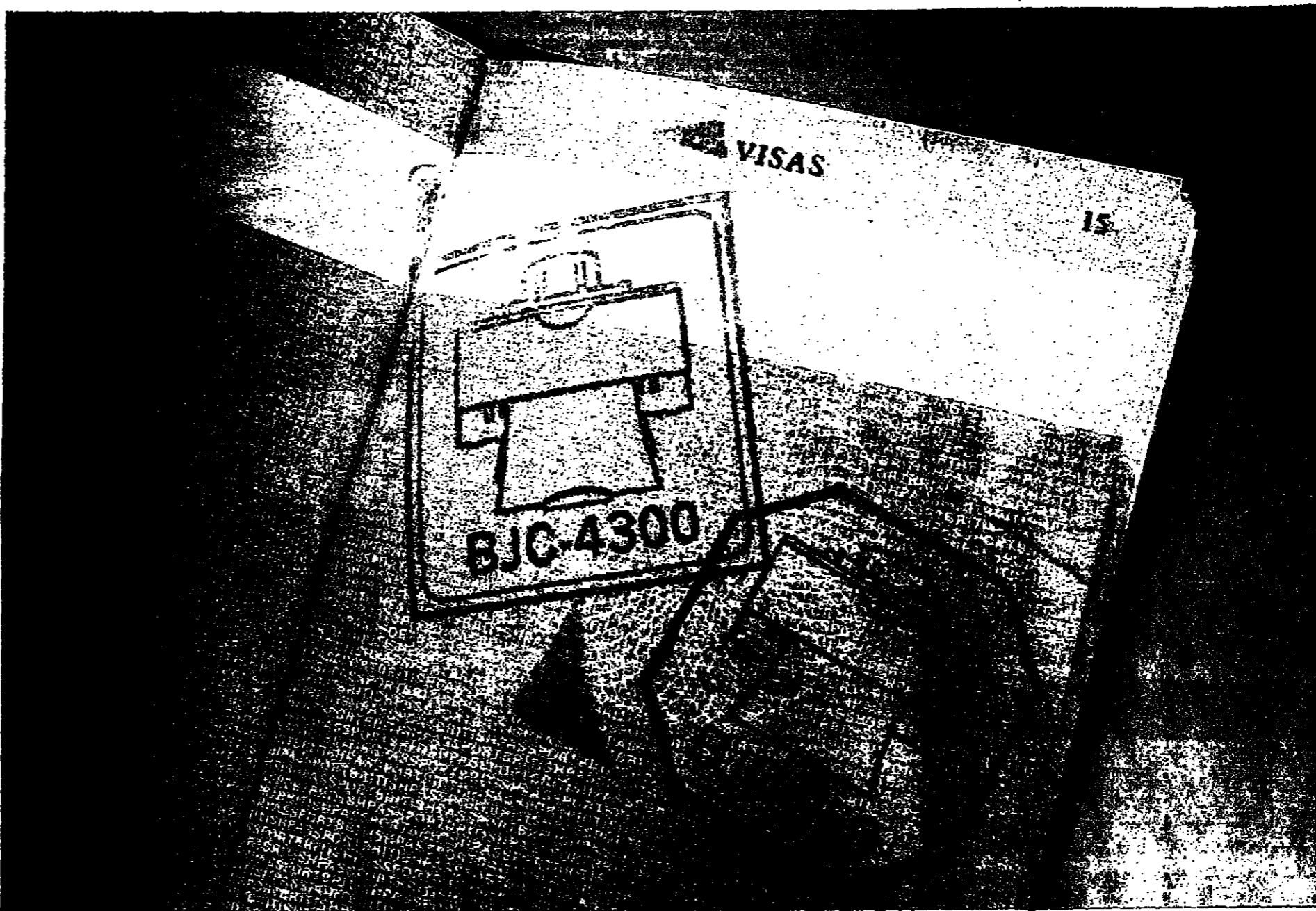
### Korean leader's son fined £1m

A South Korean court yesterday sentenced President Kim Young-sam's second son to three years in jail and fined him 1.44 billion won (£1m) for bribery and tax evasion.

Kim, 38, was charged with taking kickbacks worth 3.2 billion won in return for favours, and evading taxes on the 3.39 billion won he took as gifts. He had said that the funds were donations to finance a future parliamentary campaign. Chief judge Sohn Ji-yeol said the judges believed Kim Hyun-chul had failed in his duties as the son of an incumbent president.

The President's son was head of an organisation that helped make Kim Young-sam the first civilian to be elected president in South Korea in more than four decades. His arrest and trial has damaged the credibility of his father, who has been reduced to a lame duck ahead of presidential elections on 18 December.

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## Kohl's crowning moment fails to ignite party faithful

Europe's longest-serving leader was endorsed yesterday as the German Christian Democrats' candidate for a fifth term. However, Helmut Kohl's "coronation feast" was a tepid affair. At the CDU conference in Leipzig, Imre Karacs hears a swelling chorus of demands for change.



Kohl: A standing ovation, but the knives are out

The records will show that Chancellor Kohl received a respectable two-minute standing ovation after his keynote speech. "I ask you, dear friends, to place your trust in me," he concluded, and, as if woken from a trance, 1,000 Christian Democrats rose slowly to their feet.

They put their hands together to make a noise, but there was just no rhythm to their clapping, no bravos, no hurrahs. Even to his followers, the prospect of a fifth term for Old King Kohl did not seem all that electrifying.

For 90 minutes, the Chan-

cellor tried to keep them awake. He spoke like a Christian Democrat of old, about morality, social justice, and the dangers represented by the "globalisation" of unbridled capitalism.

"We are not the party of the market economy," he declared. "We are the party of the social market economy."

He attacked the "left", meaning the Greens and the Social Democrats, and positioned his party in the political centre. The economy was booming, and jobs would be created galore – eventually. The opposition were to blame for the legislative gridlock pre-

venting the implementation of urgent reforms, especially in taxation. He had said all those things before. "This is the third time I had heard this speech in the past week," confided the prime minister of one of the eastern Länder. The Chancellor had apparently tried it on party grandees before rattling it off for the Leipzig audience.

Some were not impressed. Much was expected of the *Junge Wilde*, the rebels who had been openly calling for new blood in recent months. Klaus Escher, the chairman of the CDU's youth wing, came closest to mounting an open attack.

"We need a horizon beyond 1998," he told delegates.

Before the conference, Mr Escher had been more specific. Even if Mr Kohl were to win, he said, the Chancellor's hands should be prised off the party reins. Yesterday, Mr Escher conceded defeat and announced he was folding his tent for the duration of the election campaign. But he continued his critical barrage, especially against the government's appalling jobs record. In Britain and the Netherlands, Mr Escher told delegates, the shops had "help wanted" signs

on their doors. "On German shops the sign says: 'To let'." He bemoaned the "deficit of ideas" on government benches. After the elections, he said, there has to be a discussion over "how one hands over the baton".

That may be a little unkind to a man who is only 67, has won power four times, and who has every chance of winning again in elections due next September. But despite economic growth heading for 3 per cent, unemployment is still rising, and the government appears powerless to reverse the tide. The structural reforms promised by Mr Kohl 15 years ago remain just that: a promise.

Thanks to the opposition's own-goals – the Greens have just unveiled their election manifesto, which calls for the dissolution of Nato – Mr Kohl's party are favourites to win next year. Never in post-war history have Germans voted a Chancellor out of office. That task is usually reserved for the party faithful. As the Christian Democrats' love affair with Helmut Kohl turns stale, regime becomes increasingly alluring. Such talk must, however, be suspended for the moment. The Chancellor must win first.



A Georgian policeman arresting a protester at a rally in Tbilisi yesterday. About 500 people had gathered to pay homage to the Georgian national hero Merab Kostava on the eighth anniversary of his death. Photograph: AP

## CHILDREN STAY free AND EAT free AT POSTHOUSE

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If you're thinking of getting away for a break this autumn, why not make it a family occasion without spending a fortune? At Posthouse there's a warm welcome waiting for everyone of all ages. As a special family money-saving bonus up to two children under 16 stay free when sharing a room with you. And at selected Posthouses up to two children under 13 can eat free too! Simply look for the hamburger symbol below.

With so many locations to choose from all over the country, wherever takes your fancy, there's a Posthouse close at hand. Posthouses are conveniently situated close to major routes for ease of access to main attractions.

There's so much on offer for all the family when you stay at a Forte

Posthouse - not only in the surrounding area, but in your hotel too! You will be perfectly placed to explore the local tourist attractions. And when you return after a hard day's sightseeing, the last thing you'll have to worry about is keeping the children amused. There are special play rooms in most Posthouses, and all bedrooms have a colour TV featuring a selection of the latest movies. In addition, at many locations, you'll have free use of our fully equipped leisure club with indoor, heated swimming pool and gym. So, you can enjoy a work-out while the kids work off some energy! Great facilities, special service and exceptional value - Forte Posthouse has all you need to give everyone in your household a real break this autumn.

TWO NIGHTS FROM ONLY £72		
Prices per person in £s, dinner, bed and breakfast.		
Luton, The Gateway*	72	-
Wakefield	76	£8
Walsall, The Boundary*	78	£8
Nottingham/Derby	80	-
Belfast	82	£8
Leeds/Selby	82	£8
Leicester	82	-
Teeside	82	-
Washington	82	-
London, Coventry Hill*	82	-
Grimbly	84	-
Hull	84	-
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	84	-
Preston	84	-
Stevenage	84	-
Ipswich	84	-
Bolton, The Beaumont*	84	-
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Peterborough	90	-
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Croydon	92	-
Dover	92	-
Haydock	92	-
High Wycombe	92	-
Manchester City	92	-
Swindon	92	-
Colchester	94	-
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Norwich	94	-
Rochester	94	-
Worcester, The Giftard*	94	-
TWO NIGHTS FROM ONLY £96		
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Chester	96	-
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Gloucester	96	-
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Sunderland	98	-
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Under 13s stay & eat free.

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Terms and Conditions: Prices are per person based on two nights accommodation (at the weekend), full traditional breakfast, 3-course evening meal & VAT at 17.5% based on two adults sharing a standard twin/double room. Two children under 16 stay free when sharing a room with two adults, subject to availability of a suitable room. At selected Posthouses up to two children under 13 stay and eat free when sharing a room with up to two adults, subject to an available room. This applies to the breakfast and evening meals that are included in the accompanying adults' Leisure Break, but does not include additional food and beverages.

Meals must be taken from the Young Diner's menu. Breakfast must be taken up to or before 22nd December 1997.

All reservations are subject to availability with a limited number of rooms available at these promotional rates. These offers cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer or special promotion.

Offer available until 22nd December 1997. Book before 23rd October 1997. See your travel agent or call

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Quoting reference: AUTUMN 5

Italian coalition offers olive leaf to Communists

Leaders of the caretaker Prime Minister Romano Prodi's centre-left coalition said yesterday that they were willing to compromise with hard-line Communists in order to form a new government. The Communist Refoundation party responded to the offer by giving its leader Fausto Bertinotti the go-ahead to begin negotiations.

Mr Prodi's Olive Tree coalition said it would ask Communist Refoundation to approve the budget as proposed to parliament last week in exchange for changes to other parts of their programme, such as the introduction of a 35-hour working week.

Mr Prodi quit last week, after Refoundation refused to back the budget plan which includes £3bn (£1.8bn) in pension and other spending cuts, which the government deems vital if Italy is to enter the European economic and monetary union.

The Olive Tree coalition warned to Mr Bertinotti following a meeting with President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, during which they asked him to re-appoint Mr Prodi as prime minister. "We think that we can and we must rebuild the parliamentary majority which emerged from the April 1996 elections," said Mauro Paissan, leader of the Greens party.

President Scalfaro has said he will decide by today whether to call early elections, ask Mr Prodi to try to form another coalition, or give the task to someone else.

**Quake sends Greeks rushing into the streets**

A strong earthquake shook Athens and south-western Greece yesterday, shaking buildings and sending people in coastal towns running from their houses. There were no initial reports of damage, but the Athens Seismological Institute (ASI) said the tremor registered a relatively strong 5.5 on the Richter scale. The ASI said the quake's epicentre was 150 miles south-south-west of Athens, about 60 miles into the sea. Police said people in Pirgos and Kalamata, which have been hit by destructive quakes before, ran out of their homes and stood in the street fearing that buildings would collapse.

**Centre takes over in Norway**

Norway's Labour minority government resigned, paving the way for Kjell Magne Bondevik and a new three-party centrist coalition to take power. The Labour Prime Minister, Thorbjørn Jagland, announced the resignation of his 12-month-old government to parliament after it had presented the draft budget for 1998. Mr Jagland had said he would stand down after the Labour Party failed to win a self-imposed target of 36.9 per cent of the popular vote in last month's general election. King Harald V asked Mr Bondevik, of the Christian People's Party, to form a new government.

**France bans 'hit squad' book**

A Paris court ordered a halt to sales of a book alleging two former cabinet ministers ordered the murder of a member of parliament almost four years ago. The civil court, responding to an appeal by former defence minister François Leotard for censorship of the book about the death of Yann Piat in February 1994, ordered a suspension of distribution and sales until 24 October. The book alleges Mr Leotard and former urban affairs minister Jean-Claude Gaudin ordered Ms Piat's killing by a secret hit squad after she uncovered plans to sell plots of army land to the Mafia.

**Belgian MP assaulted girls**

A member of parliament for the Belgian extreme right-wing Vlaams Blok party was given a six-month suspended jail sentence for indecent assault on two teenage girls. Xavier Buisseret was also stripped of his civil rights for five years. Buisseret was accused of having sexually molested the two daughters of another Vlaams Blok party member in 1992 and 1993 when he was secretary of the party's youth division. One of the girls was 17 and her sister younger than 16.

**Terror attacks greet trial of Basque leaders**

Spanish courts have put 23 Basque political leaders on trial over alleged support for terrorism. Elizabeth Nash in Madrid says the action may undermine the wave of public revulsion against the separatists' violent tactics.

The Supreme Court trial of 23 leaders of the pro-Eta Herri Batasuna party opened yesterday in Madrid, amid seething tension in the Basque Country where a number of terrorist attacks took place at the weekend.

Yesterday afternoon in Bilbao, a police officer was shot in the shoulder while guarding the new Guggenheim Museum which opens on Saturday.

The entire leadership of the HB party, which won 12 per cent of Basque votes in general elections in March last year, is charged with "collaborating with"

an armed gang" by issuing an election video calling for the government to talk to Eta gunmen.

The trial was postponed from last Monday when HB's defence claimed unsuccessfully that one of the three judges was biased. Yesterday HB called for the trial to be suspended, or shifted to the Basque Country, because of "an atmosphere of pressure in favour of a conviction". The defence says HB's position in the campaign video – which showed masked, armed men urging their vision of "alternative democracy" – was already public knowledge.

The Interior Minister, Jaime Mayor Oreja, said in a newspaper interview: "I have the moral and political certainty that Eta is HB and HB is Eta." But he added: "I cannot say whether there is a judicial reason to apply a criminal action to HB." The 23 each face eight years' jail, if found guilty. They are also accused of defending terrorism by publicly supporting Eta's assassination in 1996 of two prominent legal figures. The killings sent a wave of revulsion throughout Spain, prefiguring the eruption on to the streets of millions this summer over the murder of the local politician Miguel Angel Blanco.

The conservative Basque nationalist leader, Xabier Arzalluz, whose party backs José María Aznar's government, condemned the trial as politically motivated. The persistent fusillade of terrorist attacks in the Basque Country continued at the weekend, when a car bomb on Saturday wounded four National Guardsmen in San Sebastian. On Sunday, two Basque policemen were attacked with petrol bombs and suffered burns after a pro-HB demonstration in Bilbao.

The 23, who are all free on bail, have requested that the Supreme Court to conduct morning-only sessions so they can return to their Basque homes each night. They complain that hotels around Madrid refuse them lodgings.



Alexander Walker-Naddell rejected the conventional representation of spinal anatomy  
Photograph: Colin McPherson

Norway



## DR PHIL HAMMOND

**Sixty years ago teaching hospitals hid sub-Minstral singers and slush-happy surgeons: so what progress have we made since then?**

Thankyou, thankyou, thankyou to John Lord, the eagle-eyed sub-librarian at the University of London library. Back in July, I published a letter from a retired doctor who reminisced about his time as a "Christmas Nigger" at Guy's Hospital. I subsequently received a small clutch of hate mail from Guy's alumni denouncing the letter as a fraud and berating me for besmirching the good name of the flagship of the Tory reforms. Well, John was flicking through some old periodicals when he stumbled on Guy's Hospital Gazette, Vol. 1 (New Series) 1936 (p1).

"The Niggers, Christmas, 1935: The group of coloured gentlemen gathered before a camera on the steps of the Colonnade on the morning of Christmas Day were not, as we heard an old lady suppose, distinguished visitors being introduced to the hospital by its chaplains. It is true, however, that in a sense they were missionaries. They were, in fact (reader, you have guessed it), the 'Niggers' performing their annual mirth mission."

The pair also discovered that the GMC was six times more likely to discipline an ethnic minority doctor than a white doctor. This was not due to a persecution of ethnic minority doctors, but rather that white doctors are far more likely to get away with misconduct. This research led to an internal inquiry within the GMC and a number of "racial awareness" reforms.

What follows is a five-page review, including a photograph of 29 boot-blacked Guy's doctors. To be fair, the racism doesn't permeate further into the act except for a tendency for these white, ex-public schoolboys to refer to each other as "Massa." Their songs "warmed us in the first verse and brought us to fever pitch in the second" and had a distinctly macho flavour, eg:

"Oh! We do like to open the abdomen, / Oh! We do like to play with all the guts, / Oh we do like to see the blood go splash, splash, splash! / As the RSO goes slash, slash, slash. / So just send us up your favourite pa-

tient! / We'll wield a very pretty knife! / Four we are four house wizards! / And we'll whip out all your gizzards! / We're doing service, we're saving life."

Have you guessed the time? Of course all this was more than 60 years ago, when every teaching hospital may have had a sub-Minstral singing troupe and it was perfectly acceptable for unsupervised junior surgeons to go slash slash and whip out your gizzards. But what progress have we made since then?

Guy's medical school has now merged with St Thomas' and both have a sufficiently enlightened admissions policy that no-one need use stage make-up to effect a multicultural mix. But racism remains a big problem in medicine. In 1992, Drs Sam Everington and Aneez Esmail sent fake applications to junior hospital doctor posts, identical in all but surname. Half were Asian, half Anglo-Saxon. The latter were twice as likely to get an interview. The research was repeated this year, with marginally less depressing results.

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At present, 23 per cent of all NHS hospital doctors come from ethnic minorities, yet only a handful of these reach consultant grade - while 69 per cent of staff grade posts (the consultants' skivvies) have non-white occupants. And if not

white doctors do make it to consultant their chance of picking up a lucrative merit award is a quarter that of white peers. The legacy lives on.

As for slash-happy surgeons, the image is perhaps a little unfair. The majority are as diligent as their experience and training will allow. In the Niggers' day, you could learn from your mistakes because patients didn't rise again in the mortuary (well, not often) and relatives didn't sue. Today, doctors are expected to get it right first time, every time. In a surgical context, the minimum requirement should be that the surgeon is competent to operate. Alas, audit is so backward in medicine that many surgeons have little insight into how competent they are - or if they do, they don't share it with the patients.

In June, Professor Janet Wilson from the University of Newcastle published a national survey that found that two thirds of all operations performed by surgeons in training are unassisted - even major operations being done for the first time. Senior house officers (hardly experienced surgeons) were left alone to do their first salivary gland excisions, hernia repairs and stomach, spleen and gall bladder removals with their senior "support" not even present in the hospital.

Most operations went surprisingly well, others didn't. But in all cases the surgeon couldn't give the patient the prior undertaking that he was competent to perform the operation or would be closely assisted by someone who was. This seems a bizarre and ultimately very unsettling state of affairs. Far less stressful to lie back, think of England and sing along with the Niggers...

## VITAL SIGNS

**Fatty fat is exactly that**  
Fatty acids rarely turn into fat adults. A US study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that only 8 per cent of obese infants were also obese as adults. By contrast, the study found that children who were obese at 10-14 years had 75 per cent probability of remaining so in adult life.

**Not fungi to be with**  
A tea drink made from mushrooms and sold in healthfood shops has been associated with toxic side effects by US

researchers. Writing in the *Journal of Internal Medicine*, they describe four cases where people were admitted to hospital after drinking Kombucha tea, which comes from the mushroom of the same name. One woman developed jaundice; another reported dizziness, nausea, vomiting and headaches.

**Cancer treatment risks**  
According to studies by epidemiologists in Europe and the US, of 29,000 testicular cancer survivors, 1,406 developed a second cancer - 1.43 times

the expected number. Writing in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, they link second cancers in the stomach and bladder to radiotherapy treatment for testicular cancer, and cases of leukaemia to chemotherapy and radiotherapy. They raise particular concern about cisplatin, a drug in use for testicular cancer, as it persists "in numerous tissues long after treatment is completed." They stress the need to monitor the carcinogenic effects of treatment, as a preventive measure.

Cherrill Hicks

## Does this man understand something about back pain that nobody else knows?

As anyone with back trouble knows, all cures, or even half-cures, are gratefully received. Chlo Leland's story of vertebral discs and one man's belief that you don't need them.

Today my mother sneezed without hurting her for the first time in over a year; this is because she has undergone a revolutionary cure for two slipped discs. The non-surgical method, administered by a distinguished Glaswegian surgeon, involved nothing more complicated than a jab of local anaesthetic and a few brief sessions on his couch.

Alexander Walker-Naddell, a consultant orthopaedic and neurosurgeon, developed his technique after years in which he became increasingly dissatisfied with the results of conventional surgery for back problems.

At 87, he is one of Britain's oldest practising doctors, with a private orthopaedic surgery in the centre of Glasgow. His numbers Stanley Baxter, Max Bygraves and the Scottish golfing star, Craig Breedlove, among the many celebrities to whom he has brought relief from back pain.

Before her remarkably brief encounter with Mr Naddell my mother, aged 50, had undergone traction, chiropractic and osteopathic treatment for two severely slipped discs in her lower back. She had slept on hard beds, soft beds and in various contorted positions, but with no result other than continuous, debilitating pain.

She was finally told by a highly reputable neurologist that she would need surgery to remove the discs and replace them with metal plates in an operation known as a laminectomy. She could look forward to a six-month, bed-ridden convalescence with less than a 50 per cent chance of successful recovery. For a woman who lives for and thrives on physical activity, the prospect of never being allowed to garden or to take long walks in the countryside again was both terrifying and depressing.

There was even a risk of paralysis, which sometimes results from a vertebral column operation. As a family we ended up discussing her will over dinner and what action she would want us to take if the operation was to go wrong. Then enter Mr Naddell and, as if by magic, today my mother has just charged off up her favourite hill without even a twinge of pain.

Mr Naddell developed his technique at Glasgow Royal Infirmary nearly 40 years ago, after spending a decade dissecting bodies in the hospital's pathology department. "I didn't accept the anatomy of the spine as it was presented to me in the books," he comments, "so I had to find out for myself."

His research led to an astounding discovery. "I studied thousands of bodies and found that many of them did not have any vertebral discs. I then contacted their families and found that 90 per cent of the deceased had never experienced back problems. We do not need our discs; they are not an essential part of one's anatomy."

Mr Naddell maintains that the discs are not, as is com-

monly thought, the shock-absorbers of the spine, but the vestigial remnants of a primitive structure seen only in the foetus. The shock-absorbing role referred to is actually played by the fibrous ligaments surrounding the discs. These are made up of rings of cartilage which act as a coil or spring between the opposing vertebrae.

A slipped disc can be caused by constant wear and tear or a sudden strain on the back. It is the protrusion of the jelly-like substance which forms the disc through a tear in the ligament, which causes pain if it strikes a nerve root. By removing the disc, the pain is eradicated.

Mr Naddell's technique is simple. His consulting room is small, cosy, and festooned with military medals and he welcomed us in a relaxed manner with a smile. He required no X-rays or description of previous diagnoses made by other consultants, informing us that "I must make my own investigations or I would be giving it my best shot".

During his investigations and the whole of his treatment, my mother never even had to remove her shoes; she simply had to hold up her jumper so that he could examine her back. Then, using the largest, fleshiest thumb that I have ever seen, resulting from Mr Naddell's days as a champion student boxer, he proceeded to diagnose the condition using only touch, describing the symptoms that the neurologist and orthopaedic surgeons had required scans to detect.

The only instruments that he uses other than his thumbs are a hammer to test reflexes, aiding his diagnosis, and a syringe to inject a local anaes-

thetic into the affected area. "There does not need to be any fuss. It seems to me an unfortunate medical practice that, in order only to confirm a diagnosis, one should actually aggravate the condition one is about to try and clear up. I don't believe it is necessary to cause further pain to the patient with my diagnosis and treatment."

The treatment involves slow strong pressure on the disc with his fleshy thumb. By using the jagged edges of the ligament through which the disc is poking, he simply breaks off the protruding piece of vertebral disc. Now cut off from its food supply, this will then waste away.

Next, on an orthopaedic couch disguised by a tartan rug (her shoes still on), he begins to gradually straighten out my mother's spine, through manipulation of her leg and pelvis. Throughout the treatment Mr Naddell chats about the weather: although it is raining, he comments "the sun is shining somewhere", and we leave the surgery after only 30 minutes.

We return for five more 15 minute sessions over three days, but my mother's spinal pain has disappeared after only the second session. Between the treatments, she has to undertake specific exercises four times a day to encourage any remnants of the discs to slip out of the ligaments so that Mr Naddell can break off the protrusions, until all the offending discs have been removed. She is then given a training programme to carry out for at least two weeks after the treatment.

The treatment seemed so painless and undramatic that it has taken some time for my

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#### WHAT CAUSES HORMONE IMBALANCE?



Some experts believe that an imbalance of oestrogen and progesterone is the cause of many symptoms. If halfway through your cycle you are producing too much oestrogen and too little progesterone, you may suffer from the symptoms shown here.

Take one or more of the following symptoms seriously during your monthly cycle and let your doctor know.

• Fatigue • Headache • Backache • Irritability • Mood swings • Weight gain • Skin eruptions

• Acne • Menstrual cramps • Menstrual irregularities

• Menstrual spotting • Menstrual pain • Menstrual cramps

• Menstrual irregularities • Menstrual spotting • Menstrual pain

• Menstrual cramps • Menstrual pain • Menstrual spotting

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# THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD



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# Why you'd choose to be a woman – 100 good reasons

Debbie Boham is full of reasons to be cheerful about being female. Incidentally, the men's magazine 'GQ' celebrated its 100th issue this month by listing '100 Reasons Why It's Great To Be a Bloke'. Sad reading by comparison.

- 1: You can wear women's underwear without being arrested.
- 2: You can be sexually aroused in public without being arrested.
- 3: You can understand the mechanism of a bra strap.
- 4: You can be moody and anti-social on a regular monthly basis, without having to provide any rational explanation.
- 5: You can cry during *Sleepless In Seattle* and not have to blame it on hay fever and/or cat allergy.
- 6: You can correctly estimate the dimensions of the male genitalia.
- 7: You can become number one British women's tennis player simply by hitting a tennis ball – once – without it being out.
- 8: You can detect, by scent, when underwear needs changing.
- 9: You can be not interested in footy without being thought homosexual.
- 10: You can use public toilets at the same time as other members of the same sex without being thought homosexual.
- 11: You can fake orgasm convincingly.
- 12: You can observe a Bar-B-Q without urges to intervene.
- 13: You can remain silent whilst in a car with a woman driver.
- 14: You can blame being overlooked for promotion on "bloody male chauvinists" and the "Old Boy Network".
- 15: You can take full advantage of British Telecom's "Friends And Family" discount.
- 16: You can occupy a bathroom for over 15 minutes without the aid of pornographic literature.
- 17: You can make sexist remarks about the opposite sex without calling it "post-modern irony".
- 18: You stand a better chance of selection as a New Labour MP.
- 19: You can rely on not being charted up by Paula Yates ...
- 20: ... or by Michael Barrymore.

21: You can appreciate why scarlet crotchless leather panties are not, in fact, practical workwear for the female executive.

22: You can watch canine castration on *Vets in Practice* without wincing.

23: You can go into the lingerie department of Debenhams without the air of a fugitive.

24: You will never have to master the art of tying a bow tie.

25: You can dislike Pamela Anderson and like Clare Short.

26: When you reach the age of 60, your breasts can double as handy fly-swatters.

27: You can avoid carrying heavy items of furniture when moving house.

28: You understand what a two way dry-weave topsheet is necessary for.

29: You can happily spend an entire afternoon in The Body Shop.

30: Two words – colour coordination.

31: You can wear a ponytail and not look like a total prat.

32: You can see that you've got cellulite. It's obvious. Look.

33: After passing wind in public, you will not be compelled to utter the phrase "oi oi, better out than in".

34: You can communicate with women by telephone.

35: You can use pregnancy as an excuse for weight gain.

36: You can use "47 per cent of women are a size 16 or over – it's a fact" as an excuse for weight gain.

37: You can use "hormones" as an excuse for weight gain.

38: You can use "refusal to be influenced by anorexic models in *Vogue*" as an excuse for weight gain.

39: You don't have to worry about being a nine-stone weakling".

40: You can a) purchase tampons, b) read a map and c) eat quiche.

41: The words "falling sperm count" do not send shivers down your back.

42: You can urinate without leaving a small reservoir on the bathroom floor.

43: You can read the instruction

leaflet BEFORE assembling flat-packed furniture or operating electrical appliances.

44: You can carry a handbag.

45: You can find Jo Brand funny.

46: You will never be required to make an amusing Best Man speech at a wedding.

47: You don't have to worry that you might not be the real parent of your children.

48: You can expose your legs in hot weather and not look silly.

49: You can book a "massage" without embarrassment.

50: You can borrow your partner's clothes and not look perverted.

51: You can ask a complete



If a bad hair day is as bad as it gets, spare a thought for all those baldies

Photograph: Benelux Press/TCL

stranger for directions.

52: You can run "like a girl".

53: You never need be wary of scoutmasters with a glint in their eye.

54: You are less likely to give your private parts a pet name.

55: You can appreciate why double E-cup bosoms might sometimes be a disadvantage.

56: Women won't keep on buying you horrible ties and Old Spice for Christmas.

57: You can bear to own a car stereo that doesn't have quite so many knobs as your next door neighbour's.

58: You can drink spritzers in pubs.

59: During sex, you are unlikely to worry about climaxing too quickly.

60: You realise that "ready in five minutes" actually means three-and-a-half hours.

61: You can resist the compulsion to scratch your privates in public and photocopy your arse at Christmas parties.

62: You can keep your legs together when sitting opposite other people on public transport.

63: You partner will be PLEASED if you come home with lipstick on your face.

64: You can look at page three of the Sun without remarking loudly on the fact that you're really only reading the political story on page TWO.

65: When you reach your sexual peak, you're old enough to appreciate it.

66: You will never invite acquaintances to "smell my finger".

67: You can watch a woman peeling a banana without making lewd comments.

68: You can watch a woman removing an umbrella cover without making lewd comments.

69: You can watch a woman unwrapping a Cadbury's Flake without making lewd comments.

70: You can understand the grave severity of having a "bad hair day".

71: You can put a duvet cover on a duvet without asphyxiating yourself.

72: You can obtain nutritional sustenance without the aid of a microwave, a tin opener, or the telephone number of your local branch of Pizza Hut.

73: You can confess to having been dumped.

74: You can own a Renault Clio.

75: People will not automatically expect you to know how to play the guitar.

76: You can leave the plumbing to the plumber.

77: You are born with an instinctive knowledge of how many calories there are in any given foodstuff.

78: You can change a nappy in less than an hour.

79: Breasts are an attractive fe-

ture on a woman. As is red hair. Sometimes.

80: You can pack sensibly for holidays.

81: You will never wear jeans exposing your buttock cleavage, unless they happen to be fleetingly fashionable.

82: You can admit to being wrong about something ...

83: ... Even something as important as the Offside Rule.

84: Your status in society will never be dependent on how high you can piss.

85: You will never believe that a doner kebab is the ideal epicurean accompaniment for 15 pints of Special Brew.

86: Wearing a wig can be a fashion statement, not just a last resort.

87: Violent men are thuggish. Violent women are "feisty".

88: Men sweat. Women "glow".

89: If you claim to admire the Spice Girls because of their politics, some people will actually believe you.

90: You know the meaning of words like "exfoliation" ...

91: ... And "integrity".

92: You will never feel your masculinity threatened by large root vegetables, pepper pots or postcards featuring Nelson's Column.

93: You can appreciate that a woman who's just spent 50 per cent of her salary in Whistles can still have "nothing to wear tonight".

94: You can recall anniversaries other than Stoke City's first FA Cup win.

95: Your voice will never mutate overnight from Aled Jones into Barry White.

96: You can justifiably pass out during childbirth.

97: Your ability to concentrate is not inversely proportional to the bust size of adjacent females.

98: You have, statistically, more chance of finding a partner through newspaper contact ads.

99: You don't have to take mags like GQ seriously.

100: And finally – you just CAN, OK? Because you CAN. And if men don't understand that, then tough titties.

## REVELATIONS

### I was once told I looked like Rudyard Kipling. Now it's personal

The Time: 1996  
The Place: South East London  
The Man: David Haig, actor (Inspector Grim in 'The Thin Blue Line', Harold Nicolson in 'Portrait of a Marriage', 'Art' at Wyndhams)

Ten years ago another actor told me that I was a doppelganger for Rudyard Kipling. It was the standard actor's motive for anything – OK, I'll play that one. A couple of years after I won an Olivier award for *Our Country's Good* in 1988, I asked for a play to be written about Kipling. Nobody wanted to

know. It's only in the last four or five years that there has been a resurgence of interest – perhaps we are distanced enough from the Empire to be able to treat his complexities and writing in an objective manner.

So three years ago I decided to write a play about Kipling myself. I was determined to do something in which I could have a more complete intellectual involvement. The more I investigated Kipling and his family – the more I realised how much it tied in to my own experience. The death of Kipling's son, Jack, had a profound effect on him and the death of my sister had a similar impact on my family. Kipling's patriotic writing was part of the mood which made his only son join up to fight in the First World War.

About 15 years ago, my sister, who was only 22, had a brain haemorrhage. She was very much the third child and had enormous warmth and energy but it crashed around in every direction. After being nervous and tense through her teens, she found peace with a boyfriend and moved to a cottage in Scotland.



Kipling and his doppelganger David Haig



Photographs: Camera Press & Geraint Lewis

She had to go through a natural birth because it's healthier physically and psychologically. Through paper thin walls we could hear mothers celebrating the birth of live children. It's a crippling experience – particularly for the mother. It is so barren and arid. The reverse of everything that is natural. To give birth to death is really perverse.

When the baby was born, we had this perfect human being of tiny dimensions. We stayed with her for about three hours which was a bizarre reminder of that time with a live baby. Parents never recover from something like that, as Kipling's wife says in the play: "They stitch up the wound and go on."

We called our daughter Grace. We are trying to build her a Japanese-style garden at home. You can't imagine two less Buddhist human beings than my partner and I – but we're drawn to creating a place where we can not only think about her loss but also contemplate what life is all about. Well put in a couple of simple rocks, maybe engraved with words that mean something to both of us.

So this play has extraordinary resonances from the point 10 years ago when I was told that I looked like Kipling. Originally

it had the most base motives, a greedy actor who wanted to play a part. Now it's become something really very deep and personal. There's even a scene between Rudyard and his wife that I have written as a direct result of a conversation I had with my wife shortly after the death of Grace.

The people who survive these deaths, parents, brothers and sisters, carry on – but it can either destroy or mature them. Hopefully in real life and in the play, at least on a spiritual level, we have been strengthened. Kipling is not such a ranting, and hopefully I'm less dogmatic than I was before these experiences. The balance between my tough and soft sides has changed; hopefully the writing reflects that. I thought I was creating something that was cool but everybody tells me it is a gutted emotional play. Writing can be therapeutic but only if you stay honest and don't sentimentalise or hide the complexity of your feelings.

Interview by Andrew G Marshall

David Haig has written and stars in 'My Boy Jack' which runs until 22nd November at the Hampstead Theatre in London. Box office: 0171-722 9301.

## THE INDEPENDENT

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## The English can teach a lesson to the great football nations



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"Unfortunately the past reputation of England fans has gone before them," a Football Association official said yesterday, stating the conventional wisdom about what happened in the stands at the Stadio Olimpico on Saturday. It is a piece of wisdom, however, that needs to be challenged if those scenes are not to be repeated in France at the World Cup next year. For the fact is the domestic reputation of English football fans is excellent and has been pretty good now for a number of years. Saturday afternoons and weekday evenings, especially in the Premiership, are not quite cases of social peace, but trouble in last weekend's terms just does not happen. Understanding why that should be so is a key to ensuring a better outcome when England visits abroad in future.

We have had the braggadocio, notably from David Mellor - his panting enthusiasm to drop an immediate and half-informed view, preferably anywhere near an open microphone is a bad augury for his

conduct of the official review of hooliganism. We have had the half-baked nationalism which prefers stereotypes to real-life diversity - not all Italian policemen are wonderful, but neither are all of them practising for a role in the Taviani Brothers' forthcoming epic of *Il Duce and his Blackshirts*. We have also had the - sometimes harrowing - tales of returning fans caught up in a bewildering situation not of their making, in which poor stewardship and bad organisation bear much of the responsibility. We also have the verdict of Italian courts on "fans" whose sporting instinct is provocation and putting the boot in. Our Rome correspondents' reports of the behaviour of these ambassadors of modern England make for dismaying reading; we look forward to the next Demos report on what to do about the brand image these louts project.

Except it is something they can only get away with abroad. Football in England - Scotland reorganised the game before and

Wales has never had similar problems, at least on any scale - has been cleansed. It took the Heysel and Hillsborough disasters to provoke action. On the latter there are questions of cause and effect outstanding, which Lord Justice Stuart-Smith's inquiry may finally answer; but Lord Taylor's report led to dramatic changes in both the safety and comfort in which most fans watch football. In recent years football has been modernised. Capacity has been cut, terracing bulldozed and replaced by seats. Clubs have turned themselves into commercial operations and some of them even treat their paying customers with a modicum of respect.

In parallel, probably without sufficient credit, the police have got their act together. They have been helped by the virtual disappearance of casual travelling - nowadays there are simply too few opportunities for irregular supporters to find their way in. Tony Banks yesterday identified travel control - or rather its lack - as one reason

for Saturday's mayhem. The courts have powers to block the movement of known troublemakers. And known they are, for the police, and the football authorities, have professionalised their intelligence gathering. One of the better consequences of the establishment of the National Reporting Centre and the other measures of centralisation that accompanied the miners' strike in the mid-Eighties was an end to petty regional rivalries among police forces, especially between provincials and the Met. Now that football clubs know who their supporters are - the lucky ones who qualify for season tickets - the task of identifying the trouble-makers has become easier. One very good reason why what happened at the weekend should not influence football's international authorities in their decision about whether to locate the 2006 World Cup in England is that it said nothing about English football conditions.

Indeed what it said was that other countries, including Italy, may have something

to learn from English techniques and experience, especially in terms of ticket management and big event stewardship. The relevant comparison is Euro '96: England's track record is outstanding. The English example says that "policing" is not just a matter of boys in blue, shields and batons; it is a question of cooperation from the very earliest stages of police forces, football authorities, transport undertakers, publicans and so on. Methods of ticket allocation are as much part of the package as body searches - necessary, surely, only where intelligence indicates individuals or groups likely to throw objects - at the ground. Every footballing country in Europe has its problem "fans" - including the otherwise pacific Dutch. Can the German and the Italian and the French authorities identify them readily as the English? That is a question which the French state should be asking with real urgency and demanding answers - not just from those countries which qualify.

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number. Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk. Letters from correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

### Minister and shares

Sir: Margaret Beckett in her letter to you (13 October) still refuses to clarify which shares Nigel Griffiths owns. She has received several letters from me as she declines to tell us if Mr Griffiths, or his wife, own shares in P&O and in ICI. Why will she not tell us? Her letter leaves open whether some shares have passed to them rather than his sister. I have always made it clear that if the shares were owned by Mr Griffiths' sister I could see no problem with him continuing on the inquiry.

Why will Mrs Beckett not publish a list of all the shares owned by ministers in her department, whether they are now transferred to a blind trust or not and on what date they were transferred?

I see Nigel Griffiths has been involved with "over 100 competition decisions and issues". Would Mrs Beckett name them, at the same time as publishing a definitive list of the issues and companies which Mr Griffiths cannot handle? Mrs Beckett has not clarified which papers Nigel Griffiths saw prior to announcing an interest on 8 May and what decision he took on P&O/Stena before he withdrew from the case.

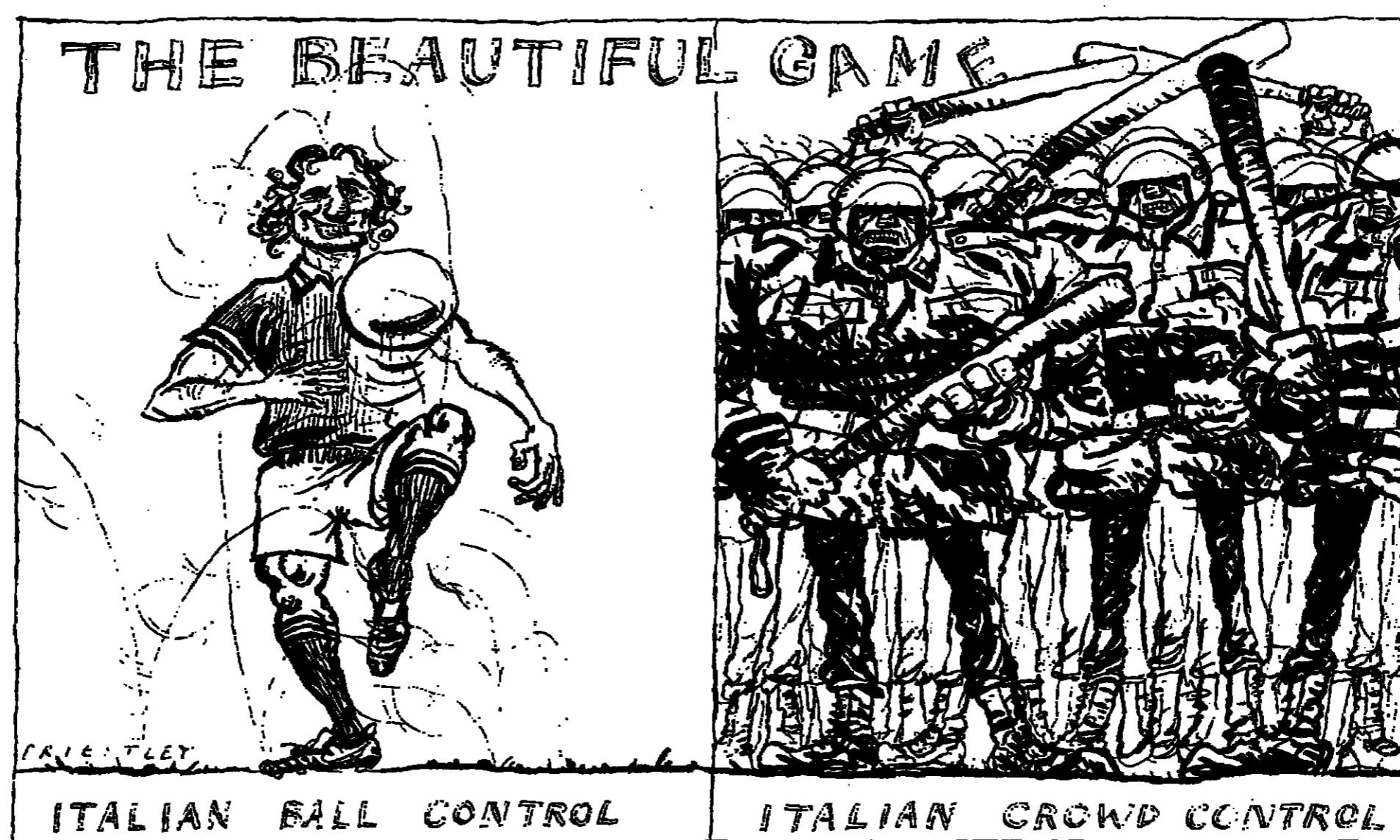
JOHN REDWOOD  
Shadow President of the Board of Trade  
House of Commons

### Into battle over EMU

Sir: So, with a combination of nudges, winks and denials, plus encouraging "come on in, the water's lovely" noises from across the Channel, the process of creating an atmosphere in which British participation in European monetary union (EMU) becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy has started.

Given the Government's pro-European, collectivist instincts, and the views of some big business, it is no surprise that an attempt is being made to bounce us into EMU. Everything possible should be done, however, to ensure that one of the most important decisions ever to face this country is not taken without the proper debate which has been lacking so far, and which proponents of EMU will try to avoid.

Whilst the euro should lead to very large savings in costs and a general simplification of busi-



ness transactions, and I have no objections to it in principle if it can work, nobody has managed to persuade me that a common currency can work in an area with such large disparities of income between member states, where member states are at different points in the business cycle and therefore require different interest rates, where labour is not mobile, and where there is no arrangement for redistributing wealth from the more to the less prosperous areas through a federal tax and benefit system, as in the US, from where warnings about the problems of EMU have recently begun to emanate.

If these questions cannot be answered satisfactorily, the assumption must be that EMU is likely to cause enormous social, economic and possibly political dislocation, the effects of which we could not avoid even if we do not join.

PETER JOHNSON  
East Preston, West Sussex

Sir: Judging from what was said at Blackpool last week, it seems evident that the division between the pro- and anti-EMU viewpoints will now lie between the Labour government and Tory opposition. The Eurosceptics will, no doubt, feel encouraged by this to return to the type of nationalist propaganda which this country had to suffer prior to 1 May. The remark by a young Tory at Blackpool is a fair sample of what we can expect: "Europeans are different - they eat horses."

I hope that the Government will not delay any longer in informing the electorate of the issues surrounding EMU and follow this up with a clear statement of their intention to join, if not in the first wave then as soon as possible thereafter.

Whom should we believe on the single currency? The anti-European MPs and economists or the job and wealth creators, comprising thousands of in-

dustries and represented by the Confederation of British Industry and others who, in principle, support EMU.

SIR HAROLD ATCHERLEY  
Chairman, European Movement, Suffolk and North Essex Branch  
Long Melford, Suffolk

Sir: Last month, at the newsagent in Gozzano, Italy where I buy my *Independent*, I was handed a free floppy disk which, in graphic style sets out the case for Italy to join European monetary union. The disk, which also gives a fascinating statistical breakdown on all other EU countries, was sponsored by Italy's treasury ministry.

The lira is not one of Europe's most stable currencies. But Italy, with all its many fiscal fault-lines, has a real commitment to make Europe work. Yes, there is resistance to EMU membership, but it is largely

about the terms and constraints. There is little lack of will to consummate the EU marriage by this final act such as you find in over-cautious, xenophobic Britain.

DAVID ROWLANDS  
Basingstoke, Hampshire

### Green buildings

Sir: Whilst I subscribe to the diagnosis of our environmental problems outlined by Charles Secrett (letter, 11 October) I feel he is being hard on a government which has hardly had a chance to penetrate the inner workings of the mind of "Sir Humphrey". We should not underestimate the scale of the commitment by Tony Blair to cut emissions of carbon dioxide by 20 per cent against 1990 levels by 2010.

The built environment imposes by far the greatest demand on fossil-based energy. This is the sector which could

deliver the carbon-dioxide reductions within the timescale and without political risk.

We have some of the worst housing in Europe, and there needs to be a national strategy to bring the whole housing stock to a standard of thermal efficiency near to the current regulations for new buildings. The most urgent requirement is for a review of the thermal section (Part L) of the Building Regulations. This needs to be substantially tightened so that in the domestic sector we are at least in line with comparable north European countries.

In commercial and institutional buildings, we need to tackle head-on the market resistance to naturally lit and ventilated offices. There is now conclusive evidence that green buildings offer a commercial advantage over their scaled, air-conditioned counterparts, not least in the health of the occu-

pants. Where there have been corporate moves from an air-conditioned office to green accommodation there has been around a 15 per cent reduction in absenteeism.

Earlier draft buildings regulations made it necessary to justify the inclusion of air conditioning. This was omitted due to pressure from the offices lobby. It should be reinstated, especially since the Government has demonstrated in an innovative building that it is possible in areas of high pollution to have a sealed building which is nevertheless naturally ventilated.

The New Parliamentary Building in Whitehall will set new standards for the offices sector.

PROFESSOR PETER F SMITH  
Chairman, Environment and Planning Committee  
Royal Institute of British Architects  
London W1

### Late converts

Sir: Deathbed conversions are commendable. Post-mortem ones such as that of the Tory party, strain credibility.

ANTHONY WRIGHT  
London, NW2

## Notes towards the definition of a third-rate power



MILES  
KINGTON

The Queen's visit to India might have gone totally unreported here if there had not been a diplomatic incident to live it up.

What do we mean by a diplomatic incident?

We meant quite the opposite. We mean an incident in which someone has been undiplomatic.

In this case, the President of India allegedly said, while on a previous visit to Cairo, that he didn't want a third-rate power like Britain intervening between India and Pakistan in the Kashmir dispute.

This would seem a fair enough comment to most of us. After all, the last time that Britain intervened between India and Pakistan, in a little

episode called Partition, we managed to create the conditions for the deaths of millions of people. Lord Mountbatten, our self-inflated representative out there, was always rather adept at sinking his own ships, but he had never arranged a head-on collision between two countries before. Even by his standards it was a triumphant disaster ...

A reader writes: Dear Mr Kington, I don't think it was the turning down of our offer to mediate that annoyed everyone. It was when the President of India described us as a third-rate nation.

Allegedly?

A reader writes: Yes, sorry.

Allegedly described us as a third-rate nation.

Oh, I see. Is that supposed to be an insult?

Yes?

Well, when you call someone a third-rate, that implies that they are ... well, third-rate.

I see. Is that bad?

Oh, yes. It tends to suggest that you think that they are not good.

Yes, hold on. We all know there aren't many first-rate nations. Hardly any. In fact, there may not be any. There are some second-rate nations. There are also third, fourth and fifth-rate nations. You can't have one rate without having the other rates.

We can't all be first and second rate.

You're on tricky ground

here, but go on.

In the same way, you can't make football teams all top division. You can cheat a bit by renaming the First Division, the Premier Division, and then moving the rest up so that the old Second Division becomes the new First Division and so on, but there are still going to be some third division teams. Indeed, there are some teams below that. There are all the Vauxhall Conference teams. A Vauxhall Conference team is below the Third Division, and yet it is never used as an insult. I mean, if the President of India had turned round and said ...

Allegedly said ...

... If the President of India

had turned round and allegedly said that Britain was a Vauxhall Conference nation, what do you think the reaction would have been?

I think the Vauxhall car people might have been a bit upset.

Or pleased. They might have taken it as a good bit of free publicity.

Y-e-e-s ... What is a Vauxhall Conference, anyway?

I don't know. I have always visualised it as a large five-door conference centre on wheels, with small walnut desks and every passenger connected by screens, so that silvery-haired executives called Ted and Harry can get together and drive up and down the M1 and thrash out

their marketing policy for the exciting new lemon-flavoured brand of cider they have dreamt up, and have it all decided in the Vauxhall Conference instead of actually going to a country hotel and wasting a lot of money on a conference suite with audio-visual aids that break down.

And each passenger gets a small chintzy lamp, like the ones you see in motorway coaches which go past you at 90mph?

No. That's for tourists. I fancy that each passenger gets a small mini-bar and a leather folder. And a lapel badge with his name and rank on it.

Why do you need that?

It will be very helpful if the car crashes at speed, because

all the bodies can be instantly identified as they are pulled from the wreckage.

Ouch. That's a bit of a third-class joke, isn't it?

Are you calling my jokes third-class?

Allegedly. Anyway, it's no worse than calling Britain a third-rate nation, surely?

Yes, but what IS a third-rate nation? Is it possible to be third-rate without having Little Chefs and Happy Eaters? Does having the best football hooligans in the world make you first-rate? If the British were really passionate about culture, wouldn't there be hand-to-hand fighting at the Booker Prize ceremony? Tomorrow, the debate continues.

## The best of neighbours in Downing Street



DONALD MACINTYRE  
ON THE KEY RELATIONSHIP

It remains the most important friendship in British politics. In and out of each other's offices every day since the middle of the 1980s, Tony Blair and Gordon Brown have an ideological outlook and mutual understanding so deep that it's sometimes difficult to decide which of them thought of which idea first.

The relationship between Prime Minister and Chancellor, First and Second Lords of the Treasury, is always a complicated one. Some of those around Ken Clarke, for example, left office with the clear view that tensions between the Chancellor and the Prime Minister are built into the system: their relationship was better before, and has been better since, they lived next door to each other in Downing Street. But the intimacy and frequency of the contacts between Brown and Blair works in a way intended to get around that problem; Whitehall officials have been struck, and a little alarmed, at how often the pair meet without civil servants. The result is something that is less an institutional relationship between Numbers Ten and Eleven Downing Street, and more that of old friends – albeit for a brief but momentous period rivals – who know each other extremely well and who can and do endlessly discuss in complete privacy the great issues of government and how to tackle them.

Nevertheless the Clarke-Major relationship, and before it that of Lawson and Thatcher, showed what an independent power base within the Cabinet a strong modern Chancellor can have. The one real scoop in the recent Channel Four documentary *Bye Bye Blues* was an interview with the former Tory chairman Jeremy Hanley who described how, not once but twice, Clarke commanded a majority of the Cabinet against a minority which included the Prime Minister. On the first occasion Clarke forced through a decision in favour of his increasing VAT of fuel, only to be subsequently defeated in the Commons. On the second, Clarke successfully resisted the funding increase sought by the then Education Secretary Gillian Shephard. When the issue was forced to a vote, the majority went with Ken Clarke, even though John Major backed Mrs Shephard.

So it would not be surprising if, on those occasions when Blair and Brown do have differences, Brown sometimes got his own way. (A recent, if entirely internal Labour Party, example is the case of the selection of the candidate to fight the Paisley by-election. Gordon Brown conducted a formidable lobbying operation on behalf of Douglas Alexander, who is now the candidate. He will almost certainly be a first class MP. But another able candidate, Pat Macfadden, who works in the Prime Minister's policy unit dropped out after at least one meeting be-

tween Brown and Blair.) Still, on most of the big issues, the Prime Minister has chosen his ground carefully, and has eventually got his way. There are two important examples from before the election: Brown didn't get his new top tax rate of 50 per cent; and Blair insisted on matching the Tories' pledge to have an EMU referendum – even though Brown had at one period proposed making the manifesto commitment of support for the single currency sufficiently strong that the election itself would have provided a mandate to take Britain in.

Which helps to put the hot issue of the day in perspective. A spate of newspaper stories – the latest of which appeared yesterday in the *Daily Mail* and Glasgow's *Herald* – have predicted EMU entry in this Parliament. This has looked awfully like Brown's allies seeking to force the pace on the timing of British entry (though it could also be an attempt to talk down the job-threatening level of the pound). But whether or not Brown wants to go faster than Blair, all the signs are that the Prime Minister is still extremely wary about the timing of a referendum.

You can talk to ministers who will say that the momentousness of the risk is overestimated, and even that the Government could come back from a defeat in an EMU referendum. That isn't, I suspect, quite how the Prime Minister sees it. Before he and Robin Cook announced plans for the British EU presidency at the beginning of December, he and Brown will surely have agreed a statement confirming that the UK will not enter EMU on January 1, 1999, but that it intends to do so when the conditions – including the Europe-wide prospects on jobs – are right for British entry. For Britain to retain influence in the EU, while being outside EMU, that will have to be pretty convincing to Britain's partners. But the timing is another matter.

Of course a referendum before the next general election is possible. So is putting an EMU pledge in the next general election manifesto. But a referendum after the next general election is likelier still. There are ministers who say the Prime Minister would not want a referendum this side of an election unless he could persuade Rupert Murdoch's newspaper to drop their still vitriolic opposition to EMU. Whether or not that's true, public opinion will take time to turn round (not to mention a few prominent Cabinet sceptics like Jack Straw.) The Conservative Party – admittedly without Clarke and Heseltine but with Michael Portillo and Margaret Thatcher – would be galvanised, spoiling for the fight. Television would have to give equal time to both sides. Defeat might be highly unlikely, but it would be catastrophic.

For whatever siren voices say to the contrary, the Prime Minister would indeed be betting the ranch; it's hard to see how a government could come back from a referendum defeat on something so fundamental and win the second term Blair so badly wants – never mind the impact on Britain's future in the EU: forget about EMU membership for a generation.

The Brown-Blair relationship is at the heart of the Government's success. No-one knows better than Blair how indispensable a motor of modernisation Brown is. Probably these issues will all be settled in the ebb and flow of constant and comradely discussion between the two of them, well away from the spin doctors. But while Brown may be as strong as Clarke, Blair is not John Major. If it comes to it, Blair will not be for bouncing.

## Nothing to rebel against – pity the poor conformists without a cause



GLENDA COOPER  
YOUTHFUL DILEMMA

"Human beings make war and hate one another. They do not understand their young, they reject their ideals, they make them come home early from the disco. They are doomed." (From *The Concerned Adolescent* by Wendy Cope)

It's hell being young. No – really it is. No one understands you see. And no one cares about how dreadfully difficult it is to find something to rebel against these days.

Youth, as Bernard Shaw pointed out, is there to shock the old and keep them up to date. Well maybe in the past. But think about being an 18-year-old in 1997. You were born a Thatcher's child and you now have to adapt to a new caring, giving Blairite society. Your older siblings knew what they were against – the Tories – even if they weren't quite sure what they were in favour of. What can you do to show you're different?

Youth icons of today offer scant support for rebellion – do you choose the Spice Girls (in essence siding with Pepsi-Cola rather than Coca-Cola)? Chris Evans or Zoe Ball (Virgin vs Radio 1), or Oasis (hanging round Downing Street and sucking up to Tony Blair).

The music industry has been particularly bad in letting poor adolescents down. Where is to go? Eton Riffles (The Jam) or UB40 singing "I am a One in Ten", or even Woody Guthrie's "This Land is Your Land" – the anthem of the International Trade Union Movement.

Instead on Sunday the Spice Girls played their first live concert – not a bad achievement for a band who have already had three chart-topping singles. "If you really wanna know, yes they can sing," said the *Daily Mail* yesterday. But what you should really wanna know about is the marketing.

While in the past bands may have worried more about social injustice, the Spices obviously have their heads screwed on the right way by aligning themselves with a soft drink brand. All 8,000 or so people attending the concert had done so as competition winners for Pepsi-Cola. Pepsi has



The times they are a-changing: Bob Dylan sings for the Pope

Photograph: AP

received 12,000 applications a day for a Spice Girls single that can only be had by buying a can of the soft drink.

The proponents of Girl Power did remember to shout a bit of their philosophy: "We are five individuals who do not have to be the same," said Mel B (Scary). "You can start your own business and believe in yourself. But you must help your sisters," said Geri Spice.

But perhaps Posh Spice summed up their thoughts best. Asked if she would marry the England footballer David Beckham she replied: "That's none of your business... But he drinks Pepsi too," she parroted. Product placement like no other.

*Marketing Week* warned last week that the Spices were in danger of overkill – besides the Pepsi deal there is a link-up with Walkers crisps, an Impulse Spice range of scents, a tie-up with Chupa Chups lollipops, a Polaroid SpiceCam and a BT advertising campaign planned before Christmas.

How can an adolescent take such a marketed concept seriously? But then the Spices aren't alone in disappointing to

day's youth. Even Guthrie himself who inspired Pete Seeger in the Forties, Bruce Springsteen in the Sixties, Bruce Springsteen in the Seventies, now finds himself part of the establishment as one of the singers he influenced – Billy Bragg in the Eighties – has been chosen to be in charge of his archive material. Archive material!

What's the point of watching a real rock'n'roll band start their tour in Chicago when your dad next to you knows the words better than you do. And don't mention Bob Dylan. The man has yet another album out this month and he played for the Pope last month. Bob Dylan? Playing for the Pope?

And where's the excitement in telling your round-eyed parents that Noel Gallagher has compared drug taking to having a cup of tea when you open the papers the next day to find him snuggling up to the prime minister in Downing Street. You have to do a lot of spitting and swearing before you can regain your street cred after that.

Last week as well, former rock star Bill Drummond of the K Foundation warned rock

stars against cosying up to the new establishment. In particular, he attacked Alan McGee, head of Oasis's record company, Creation, for joining the Government's task force on the arts.

"I'm getting very frightened," said Drummond. "It seems that the establishment has pulled the arts to its bosom, but it is the job of the arts to stand outside the establishment. As soon as you start becoming part of the PR of a government you are getting into a dangerous area."

Mr McGee justified his decision by saying that he was not a rebel. So that's alright then.

Still there's always the ginger whinger, the DJ Chris Evans, to be the rebel you know and love. No stunt's too other.



## Social change is best done in small, reversible steps



ANDREAS WHITTAM SMITH  
LEGALISATION OF MARIJUANA

A satisfactory inquiry into cannabis, its uses and abuses, and the role of the law, could be rapidly completed. There is no need for the cumbersome machinery of a Royal Commission to re-do the extensive research which has already been carried out into all drugs and their varying effects upon health, behaviour and crime. The latest issue of the American magazine, *Science*, for instance, contains a thorough analysis of the results of the Dutch experiment in liberalising the law on cannabis, both as

regards possession and dealing.

The many studies like this into every aspect of the subject could be collated and summarised without much difficulty and in double quick time. The Government should undertake this useful task of providing a briefing for the public; such a document would be a public service not a policy initiative.

The questions, at least, are clear. What are the effects of cannabis on the user? Does it lead to anti-social behaviour? Is it addictive? How does it compare to alcohol? Does it provide a gateway to the use of hard drugs? How much success has government policy had during the past fifteen years? What have been the costs of this policy? What can we learn from Spain and Italy, where decriminalisation has also taken place, and from the different policies adopted by US states, as well as from Holland? What are the medicinal uses of cannabis?

The answers will be found to lack precision. A Rochdale doctor told a recent conference of the British Medical Association that cannabis had unpleasant effects, such as distorting perception, reducing vigilance and causing apathy and indifference. But another

study declares that cannabis is a fairly mild hallucinogenic or euphoriant. Are the two saying the same thing and do they imply that cannabis is more dangerous than alcohol?

Some of this can be sorted out. But not all. Any inquiry would be left with a series of answers that fall into wide ranges of probability. Nonetheless, the findings, taken together, would support the case for decriminalisation. That is why I think that the best approach that the Government could take would be to try to make progress by tiny steps, starting immediately. The poll in the *Independent on Sunday* shows that public opinion would be in favour. If ever there was a problem demanding an application of British pragmatism, this is it. I define a "tiny" step as one which could be reversed without embarrassment.

The new drugs "czar", for instance, whose appointment is due to be announced by the Prime Minister tomorrow, will no doubt observe that police policy towards possession of cannabis varies across the country. In some places, people are arrested and charged, in other areas they are only warned. It would be useful to compare and contrast the effects of these

different approaches. Indeed for this reason it might even be advisable to maintain this diversity for some time. Then, having gained confidence from this experiment, as I assume it would, the government would be able to state that national policy would be for the police to issue warnings rather than charges except in flagrant cases. If such a policy appeared to work safely, having tried it out for, say, two years, then it would not be such a big step to decriminalise possession altogether – except of commercial amounts. At this stage, dealing would still be a criminal offence.

It is in this pragmatic spirit that the Secretary of State for Health, Frank Dobson, made a useful contribution to the debate last week. He said that he would look at the case for amending existing legislation so that cannabis could be prescribed by doctors for certain conditions, particularly for people with multiple sclerosis. California has already taken this step. The drug helps reduce tremors and spasms and it eases movement. AIDS sufferers likewise claim that it improves their appetite.

If these various measures worked well, then the next move would be more of a leap

than a step. The Government might well pause before taking this decision. For it would involve removing the trade in cannabis from the streets, from pubs and clubs and from criminal gangs and giving licences for its distribution to approved outlets. I am not sure that the United Kingdom would want to follow the Dutch pattern of allowing some 1,500 "coffee houses" to deal in small quantities. It might be that high-street pharmacies would be more suitable, seeing that their staff already have the appropriate training.

But we would do well to insist that licensed distributors follow the five rules that Dutch coffee shop dealers have to observe. As with alcohol, no sales to minors. That is obvious enough. Likewise no public disturbances, something for which British public houses can also lose their licences. A further rule is – no advertising. This is extremely important. The evidence from the years following the ending of prohibition of alcohol in the United States in 1933 is that it was the gradual increase in advertising that lifted consumption rather than de-regulation itself. There was no steep jump when the law was relaxed.

The Dutch also prohibit licensed dealers in cannabis from selling hard drugs. For the Dutch, this is a crucial issue. In the unregulated, criminal market, cannabis is generally sold alongside hard drugs. But applying a licensing system to cannabis actually breaks the link. The Dutch believe that separating the soft- and hard-drug markets reduces the so-called "gateway" effect. The final Dutch safeguard is to set limits on the amounts of cannabis that can be supplied in each transaction and the amount that can be held in stock. The thresholds are set at low levels.

What I am arguing is that legalising the supply and consumption of cannabis should not be seen as a big-bang decision.

Rather than endlessly debating the grand issues and coming to no conclusion, it would be better to get going with limited initiatives, measure the results, be ready to turn back if the consequences are unfavourable; and, otherwise, keep pushing ahead. Perhaps it would take as long as five years to reach legalisation of possession and another five to bring in a licensing system for suppliers. No matter, it is the direction that counts rather than the speed.

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## OUTLOOK ON THE SPATE OF TAKEOVERS, BERNARD ARNAULT AND NICHE PUBLISHERS

Whatever the collective term is for a group of Euro-takeovers (a concordat of the blighters, perhaps), we certainly had a bally full yesterday. With Bernard Arnault settling for blood money and dropping his objections to the Guinness/Grand Met merger, BAT Industries' decision to sell (effectively) its huge insurance interests to Zurich, the Lafarge bid for Redland, and the Reed Elsevier merger with Wolters Kluwer, we seem to have entered a new phase of merger mania – and one with a European dimension, what is more.

It is silly, perhaps, to generalise too much on the basis of four very different takeovers, each with their own special set of motives, but there are obviously some themes here. The first is the growing realisation among investment bankers that, with the narrower domestic market for consolidating mergers all but closed off by a hostile Labour government, it is important to go for a deal with a genuine European dimension to it, one that escapes consideration by domestic competition authorities and is instead examined by the more user-friendly and predictable officials of the European Commission in Brussels.

In itself, this seems to be forcing British industry away from domestic mergers and into cross-border ones. Add in the growing pressures of the single European market and the approach of monetary union, and it is obvious why companies are going this route. It may not be possible to buy market share in your own country any longer, but you can con-

solidate within the single market without too much interference.

For instance, it will undoubtedly be easier for BAT Industries to get the merger of Eagle Star and Allied Dunbar with Zurich cleared by Brussels than it would have been to persuade Mrs Block (Margaret Beckett) to allow a similar merger in Britain with Commercial Union (which was the plan at BAT Industries last year). The same goes for Grand Met and Guinness. The European Commission is about to clear this marriage with only modest conditions attached. Had it been Mrs Beckett's call, she would almost certainly have packed it off to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

The second theme is an old one – pressure across all industries for consolidation and focus as markets become more international and global in nature. BAT's announcement encapsulates both pressures, demerger to allow the tobacco and insurance interests to roam free and merger to give the insurance interests a powerful new voice in Europe and beyond. The scope for cost cutting in the tie up with Zurich might not be as great as with some of the alternatives, but there do seem to be genuine synergies between the two and in so far as it is possible to judge these things on the limited amount of information available, BAT shareholders are ending up with the better half of the deal.

Finally, there is the way in which the perceived scope for cost cutting, rationalisation and consolidation in industry and commerce is driving up equity values,

both here in Europe and in the US. Yesterday's 7.8 point rise in the FTSE 100 index was almost entirely down to the three big FTSE stocks directly involved in the latest outbreak of merger mania and the realisation that other big companies must now respond. We can expect a lot more of this sort of thing as the single currency approaches. Whether this is enough in itself to sustain stock prices at present buoyant levels is a rather more difficult question to answer.

### Cost of getting Arnault on side

We live in the real world so the sight of Grand Metropolitan and Guinness paying Bernard Arnault £250m of what once upon a time would have been called "green mail" may not seem that shocking. The realist would say that given Mr Arnault's continuing ability to block the deal and generally make a nuisance of himself, £250m is cheap at the price.

However, there is a more purist view that would paint Mr Arnault as just another shareholder in Guinness and Grand Met, albeit a large one. In those circumstances he should not be entitled to any more than other shareholders are getting. It could be argued, as some in the City were yesterday, that Mr Arnault is getting what the takeover code specifically forbids – favourable terms.

Guinness has no doubt been properly advised on all this and it is true that ex-

tending present distribution agreements between Guinness and Mr Arnault to the merged group will bring in extra cost savings not originally identified – equal to about £25m a year year by Guinness's estimation. There is some commercial benefit.

Even so it is hard to see what else has been achieved other than bringing a generally fractious shareholder on side. Furthermore, the £250m doesn't succeed in getting rid of the Arnault problem for good. He continues as a director of the merged group and his powerful pre-emption clauses in the joint distribution arrangements remain untouched. GMB Branda could easily find itself replaying this episode a few years down the line.

### Deal makes Reed a powerful force

Learned tomes such as *Tolley's Income Tax* and the *Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory* may sound as dull as ditch water and to the average man on the street they almost certainly are. But to experts who need to keep abreast of developments in these fields, they are vital. Publishers of this kind of material in the printed, and increasingly on-line, form can make a killing.

Reed Elsevier is already a powerful player in these markets. Its professional and scientific divisions, which include the Tolley and Butterworth imprints, have margins to die for and yesterday's near-£200m tie-up with Wolters Kluwer of

Holland will make the enlarged group an even more dominant force.

For once it seems true that here is a deal that is genuinely not about cost-cutting. The tongue-twistingly named Elsevier Wolters Kluwer says the merger will yield £250m of savings a year after year three – which is just over 1 per cent of the combined group's cost base. That's not much. The enlarged group keeps headquarters in both Britain and Holland and just about everyone keeps their jobs in this one – in the boardroom at any rate.

If no significant cost cuts, why do it? The intention is to build up dominant content and then push it through a variety of formats such as print, CD-Roms and the Lexis-Nexis database. Judging by Reed's share price yesterday – up 18 per cent – the City generally buys the idea of a powerful combination increasingly able to put the squeeze on smaller rivals. Analysts are also impressed by the willingness of Wolters Kluwer to take on Reed so soon after the recent circulation-overstatement fiasco at Reed's travel subsidiary.

Business and professional information is a market that is rapidly consolidating – witness the recent Maid deal with Knight-Ridder. Reed's surprise move has increased the pressure on other players, so more deals seem inevitable. It may also force the long-awaited sale by Reed of its IPC consumer magazines division. However, with analysts saying Reed would need to raise £1bn from the sale just to achieve earnings neutrality, perhaps we should not be holding our breath.

## RJB leads coal delegation to Downing St

**Britain's coal industry, led by the biggest producer RJB Mining, has told the Government it should be allowed to take over and operate coal-fired power stations that are under threat of closure.**

**Michael Harrison reports on the latest attempts to provide a lifeline for the country's coalfields.**

The Government was warned yesterday that eight pits and up to 4,000 jobs could disappear unless it acted to support the coal industry. A delegation to Downing Street, led by RJB's chief executive Richard Budge, urged officials to impose a temporary ban on approvals for further gas-fired stations and provide financial support for a new generation of environmentally friendly clean coal power stations.

However, the industry is also drawing up plans to save redundant coal-fired generating capacity from being moth-

balled and dismantled. Industry executives believe that before being allowed to close coal-fired stations, the three big fossil fuel generators should be required to offer it to other parties.

"If there is coal burning capacity that is coming off the system that has useful life, then it makes sense to offer it to someone else to operate. It would also help stimulate competition," said one executive.

Later, Mr Budge said the 90-minute meeting with Geoff Norris, who advises the Prime Minister on energy, as "useful" but refused to be drawn further.

A fortnight ago PowerGen announced the closure of a

400MW unit at Ferrybridge C power station in Yorkshire, reducing the market for coal by a further 1 million tonnes a year.

The delegation from the Confederation of UK Coal Producers told Downing Street that a fundamental review was now needed of the UK electricity generating market, arguing that it was increasingly biased against coal. While the review is being conducted, it wants a moratorium on any further consents for gas-fired stations.

The incoming Labour government angered the coal industry in August when it gave the go-ahead for a 1,200MW gas-fired station at BP Chemicals' Salt End works near Hull.

Kevin Barron, the Labour MP for Rother Valley, attacked the decision yesterday. "It's sad about the recent permission to build a gas-fired power station – we said we weren't going to do that," he told Radio 4's *Today* programme.

"What we need to do in this country is to have an energy policy that is sustainable, that is diverse and is secure. Deep mine coal is an essential part of that, and I think everybody understands that."

## City investors predict UK will join euro early

**A new survey of fund managers revealed that three-quarters of them reckon Britain will join the single currency before 2002. This suggests the financial markets have already started making the adjustments necessary for UK membership, says Diane Coyle, Economics Editor.**

**Only one in 10 of the UK-based investors covered by Merrill Lynch's regular survey said they believe Britain will never join the European single currency. Fully 76 per cent think the UK will be in from 2001 or 2002, before the end of the current Parliament.**

This surprising degree of consensus has emerged after a leak of the Government's intention to take a more positive approach towards membership of Europe's economic and monetary union. This lopped several pence off the pound's exchange rate against the German mark at the end of last month and took gilt yields much closer to low German yields.

Bijal Shah, global strategist at Merrill Lynch, said: "Given that the vast majority of managers expect the UK to join EMU, much of the convergence yields between UK gilts and German bunds may already have occurred."

The pound climbed a little on the foreign exchanges yesterday because of disappointing figures on producer prices. Even so, it ended at DM2.84,

still well below its level of DM2.87 two weeks ago.

The latest official figures for prices paid by manufacturers for their raw materials, and charged at the factory gate, were described as "disappointing" by City analysts.

Input prices increased 0.5 per cent last month, and the year-on-year rate at which they are falling was 7.8 per cent compared with 8.3 per cent in August. Output prices rose 0.2 per cent in September, to a level only 1/4 per cent higher than a year earlier. Underlying prices, excluding energy, food, drink and tobacco, rose 0.1 per cent in the month and 0.8 per cent year on year.

This showed inflation at the start of the chain to be tame but not quite as subdued as expected. In particular, food prices are showing signs of an inflationary pick-up.

But with manufacturing lagging behind the rest of the economy, prices charged for services and wages present a greater cause for concern. "The unemployment and earnings data due this week will be much more important for the path of base rates," said Adam Cole of James Capel.

A survey of high street sales by the British Retail Consortium showed a sharp dip in sales growth last month. The BRC said the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales had reduced sales by an estimated £230m, but it said spending had begun to slow even allowing for this. On a "like-for-like" basis, adjusted sales were up at an annual rate of 3.4 per cent compared with 3.9 per cent in August.

### Reports confirm north-south divide grows even wider

The north-south divide, bugbear of the British business cycle, has reopened, according to two new reports. House prices in Greater London have risen two times faster than the national average, according to the latest regional breakdown from Halifax. In the third quarter of this year they rose by 1.8 per cent in the capital compared to a national average increase of 0.9 per cent and a decline of 0.7 per cent in Northern Ireland.

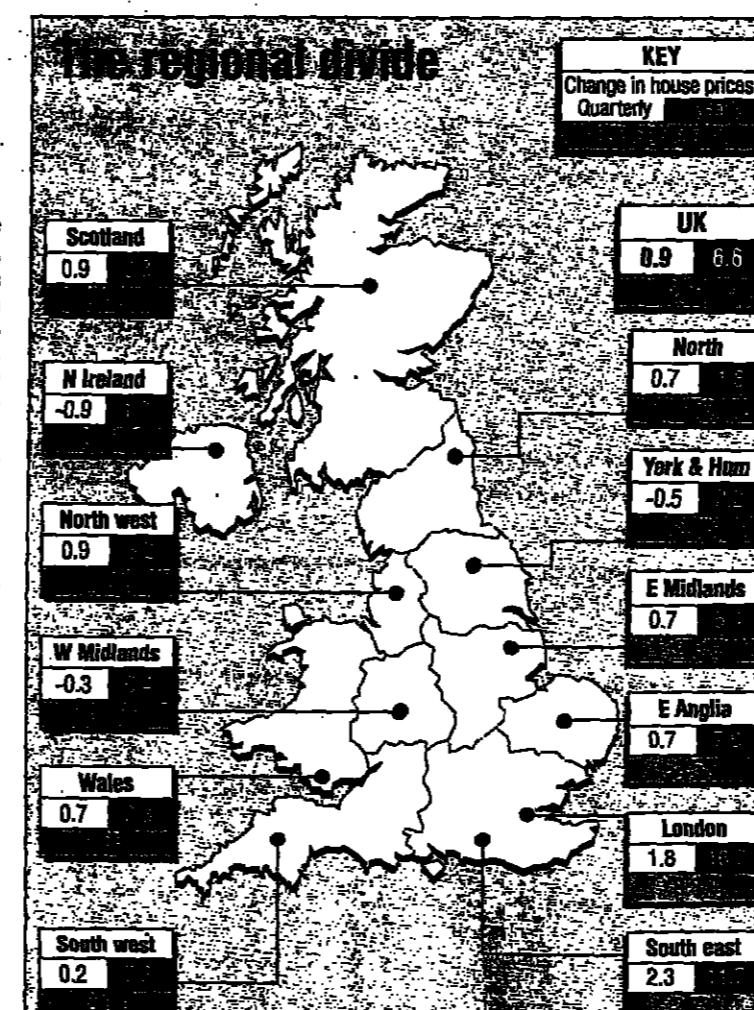
House price booms normally rippled out slowly from London through the South-east and on to the rest of the country and in July Halifax reported that this pattern had begun to emerge.

However, in its commentary yesterday, it said: "The latest figures show little evidence that the so-called 'rippe effect' is gaining momentum."

As a result the gap between northern and southern price gaps wide. The average semi in a pleasant London suburb such as Ealing costs £186,250, according to Halifax's figures, while a similar property in Harrogate would cost only £70,450. The national average price of a semi is £65,898.

A separate report yesterday focused on the uneven regional spread of the economic recovery. Business Strategies Ltd (BSL) said the combination of booming consumer spending with limping growth in manufacturing meant that "the old north-south divide is opening up again".

Neil Blake, a director of the consultancy, said London, the South-east and the South-west, along with



parts of the east Midlands, were prospering because of their greater exposure to consumer spending and private sector service businesses.

The report predicts private services will grow by 6.4 per cent this year, compared to a meagre 1.7 per cent expansion in manufacturing.

BSL is predicting the boom will be short-lived, with growth slowing to 2 per cent next year from a likely 3.4 per cent this year. However, the report puts average economic growth at 2.7 per cent between 1993 and 2000, compared with 2.2 per cent between 1982 and 1993.

– Diane Coyle

## IN BRIEF

### Judge refers no-win no-fee issue to Court of Appeal

Whether a group of smokers with lung cancer can sue the UK tobacco industry hangs in the balance after a High Court hearing on Friday failed to decide whether their lawyer was liable to pay costs should he lose his case. Mr Justice Popplewell has referred the issue over who pays costs, regarded as make or break for no-win no-fee group actions in the UK, to the Court of Appeal. He also placed a gagging order on Martyn Day of solicitors Leigh Day, which is bringing the case and on Imperial Tobacco and Gallaher, the UK tobacco companies being sued. Mr Day last week told *The Independent* that he would be forced to drop the case if there was a risk he would be liable for costs. Weekend press reports that the court has dismissed claims by 21 of the 47 cases are erroneous. Leigh Day has dropped four of the 47 lung cancer cases. Of the remainder, 22 are suing both Imperial and Gallaher and 21 will sue just one of the companies. Leigh Day is considering another 35 lung cancer cases and expects to bring another 25 into the proceedings.

### BAA passenger figures grow

BAA has had its busiest September with more than 10 million passengers using airports, an increase of more than 7.4 per cent on the same month last year. Flights to Eire and North America both grew by more than 10 per cent, with European charter flights and domestic flights up by 8.2 and 7.6 per cent respectively. Southampton airport had the highest growth with an increase in passengers of 16.1 per cent.

### Bovis Homes to be floated

P&O announced plans to float 100 per cent of its Bovis Homes subsidiary by early December. Malcolm Harris, chief executive of Bovis, said the housing market was far from running out of steam and the timetable was justified. P&O will float the shares in a placing. Details will be set out in a pathfinder prospectus to be published in November. Mr Harris said concerns that the UK housing market was running out of steam were misplaced. In 1996 Bovis Homes completed the sale of 2,456 homes and made an operating profit of £29.4m. Analysts have forecast a flotation value of £250m to £300m for Bovis.

### First for Family Assurance

Family Assurance has become the first friendly society to launch a separate investment management company. It is handing over control of its £1.5bn fund to Pavilion Asset Management, a wholly owned subsidiary of Family which will be based in Brighton. Family will initially compete for business with charities and other friendly societies. Christopher Edge, chief executive, will then aim to expand funds under management by at least £50m a year by bidding to manage pension funds in the Sussex region.

### Kingfisher postpones talks

Kingfisher has postponed discussions with Michel Venturini, managing director and major shareholder of But, on whether to buy out his family's 30 per cent stake in the French company. In July, Kingfisher, which already holds a 26 per cent stake, announced it was discussing buying the stake for around F300 per share. However, Kingfisher said it still had the option to buy a controlling interest.

### Rugby buys into Polish firm

Rugby Group has acquired a 34 per cent stake in Cementownia Chelm, a Polish cement manufacturer, for £15.4m, with an option to increase ownership to 75 per cent for a total price of £60.5m. Chelm is undergoing a modernisation programme and hopes to complete a cement plant capable of producing 1.6 million tonnes a year by the middle of 1999. A member of Rugby's senior management is moving to Poland to work on the modernisation programme. In 1996, Cementownia made profits before tax and extraordinary items of £200,000 on sales of £33.2m. It commands a 10 per cent share of the Polish market.

### Scandinavian banks merge

Merita, Finland's largest bank, will merge with Nordbanken, the third-largest bank in Sweden, it was announced yesterday. The new bank will be worth around \$10.6bn (£6.3bn).

## Waterstone to set proposals before WH Smith today

**WH Smith will finally meet Tim Waterstone today to discuss his audacious restructuring plans for the high street书商。**

**But as Nigel Cope, City Correspondent reports, his revised set of proposals may still receive a frosty reception.**

Both sides declined to comment on the planned meeting yesterday but it is understood that Jeremy Hardie, WH Smith's chairman, and Richard Handover, its new chief executive, will meet Mr Waterstone today in an attempt to assess if his proposals have any merit for shareholders.

Ian Martin, the Unigate chairman who is being proposed by Mr Waterstone as deputy chairman of the re-

vised group, will also attend the meeting. Mr Waterstone will present a revised set of proposals to Mr Hardie and Mr Handover at the meeting. Instead of the original 20p per share payout, which would have been funded by almost £600m of new debt, Mr Waterstone will propose a distribution of between 125p and 150p. Shareholders will also receive shares in a new company with around £400m of debt.

The new proposals, under

which Mr Waterstone would install himself as chief executive, also see a fair lower valuation attached to Daisy & Tom, Mr Waterstone's children's operation which has a single shop on London's Kings Road.

Instead of the £55 valuation in the original proposals, the deal will suggest a £25m valuation, the same sum as invested by Mr Waterstone and backers. Additional payments would be made on an earn-out basis.

WH Smith is still reeling from earlier revelations that its non-executives had not been present when it was decided to reject Mr Waterstone's bid.

Though reports suggested Mr Handover had said the board was unanimous it is understood that Michael Orr was in Australia, Patrick Lupo was in Brussels, and Marjorie Scardino was giving briefings on Pearson. Martin Taylor did not attend either.

## Outbreak of merger mania sends Footsie racing higher

### MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN  
STOCK  
MARKET  
REPORTER  
OF THE YEAR

It was more action packed than even the more rumbustious takeover days of the 1980's. Suddenly four major deals, worth a staggering £6bn, hit the stock market in quick succession, inevitably provoking speculation about future corporate activity.

Shares of the principal players romped ahead. BAT Industries, hoping to merge its financial operations with Zurich of Switzerland, rose 58p to 609p and Reed International, on the proposed merger of Reed Elsevier and Wolters Kluwer, reacted with a 97p jump to 629p.

With LVMH bowing to the Grand Metropolitan and Guinness merger the two drinks groups were in celebratory mood with GrandMet up 21p at 604p and Guinness 28p to 605.5p.

Redland, the hard pressed

building materials group, added 79p to 336.5p as Lafarge, the French group, bid £1.7bn, or 320p a share.

Heavy trading in Redland, which quickly rejected the offer, indicated the French picked up stock.

The possible spin-offs from the deals added to the intense excitement of merger Monday.

Shorn of its financial operations BAT could seek to develop its tobacco side. Gallaher, floated in May, is the market's favoured target and the shares rose 34p to a 329p peak. Imperial Tobacco was also caught in the smoke signals, swirling 20.5p higher to 391.5p.

The BAs' adventure also drew attention to insurance shares. The market is appreciative of the existing strains and stresses which could prompt more corporation ac-

tion and was quick to hoist such shares as Prudential Corporation, up 29.5p to 698p, and GRE, 17p to 343p.

On the drinks front Alfred Domesey was a beneficiary of the sudden LVMH compliance. The suspicion the GrandMet/Guinness alliance will force it into a defensive merger - Seagram of Canada or Pernod Ricard of France? - boosted the shares 12.5p to 509p, highest since last year.

The market was so beset by the sudden outbreak of merger mania that even a deal which was put on hold drew applause. Kingfisher's decision to defer plans to take control of BUT, the French chain, by buying a further 30 per cent prompted a 25p gain to 857.5p. The Woolworth's group already has 26 per cent of the electrical retailer.

The sheer deluge of corpo-

rate action sent Footsie racing 72.8 points higher to 5,300.1 and the two main supporting indices moved to new peaks.

Friday's two modest bids prompted further activity as the Far Eastern Jardine Motors scooped up 8.78 per cent of its intended victim, Appleyards, at 78p a share; Peck, the traffic control group, signalled a 36.5p gain to 78.5p follow-

ing the after-hours £98m (80p) offer from the US Thermo Power, which moved into the market to lift its stake to 9.64 per cent.

British Aerospace, which said overseas investors had reached 28.7 per cent of its capital, and Rolls-Royce were higher on the news that the Government is on the verge of lifting the ceiling on foreign shareholdings from 29.5 per cent to 49.5 per cent. Rolls, up 7.5p to 236p, greets Scandinavian investors on Thursday under the auspices of Henderson Crosthwaite. BAe was 27p harder at 1,726.5p.

Imperial Chemical Industries was a significant absentee from the sea of blue. It shaded 4p to 982p as worries persisted about its third-quarter results. BSkyB, the satellite broadcaster, was another subdued blue chip, softening

2p to 445.5p as Merrill Lynch downgraded its stance to neutral.

Halifax had the dubious distinction of being the worst performing blue chip, falling 11.5p to 730.5p in brisk trading.

TradePoint, the stock market in miniature, continued to benefit from next week's switch to order-driven trading gaining 12p to 148.5p. Flare, an engineer, firmed to 118p despite the departure of chairman Ian Gowrie-Smith; his family's 8 per cent interest was placed with institutions at 116p.

Dawn To Dark, a chain of convenience stores, fell 15p to 242.5p after admitting getting a decimal point in the wrong place. On Friday the company said like-for-like sales were up 31.5 per cent. Yesterday the advance was corrected to 31.5 per cent.

### TAKING STOCK

**Speculation Prestbury**  
Leisure is set to become a vehicle for Nigel Wray and Nick Leslau strengthened as the shares were suspended after a 5.5p gain to 9.25p. The company said it was in talks which could lead to an acquisition. There had been expectations Prestbury would buy a football club but such a deal now seems unlikely.

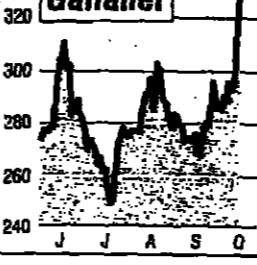
Carbo, the engineer reshaped under Ken Jackson, has duly sold its foundry for just over £2m. Since the revamping exercise started three years ago businesses worth around £26m have been sold. At 29p Carbo is valued at £22.9m.

**Label group Jarvis Porter**  
added 5p to 230.5p as takeover hopes resurfaced. Britain, in receipt of a US bid, has indicated the hidden value in packaging. Jarvis was 310p last year.

### Share Spotlight

share price, pence

340



Source: Bloomberg

### Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is the latest twelve months' declared gross dividend as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (PE) ratio is based on earnings forecast for the year ended 31 December 1997. Dividends are expressed as a decimal fraction per share, excluding extraordinary items but including special dividends. Yield is based on latest dividend paid. PE ratio is based on latest forecast. Source: Bloomberg

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Saxo volume: 655.8m trades 55.28

Gifts index n/a

### Market Leaders Top 20 volumes

Stock	Vol	Stock	Vol	Stock	Vol	Stock	Vol
High	Low	Stock	Price	Cig Yd	PE/Cde	High	Low
22	23	Fiat	210.00	1.00	20	22	23
24	25	Prudential	698.00	1.00	14	24	25
26	27	Standard Life	525.00	2.00	15	26	27
28	29	ICI Group	240.00	1.00	14	28	29
30	31	Globe & Mail	200.00	1.00	14	30	31
32	33	Guinness	875.00	1.00	12	32	33
34	35	Barclays	245.00	1.00	14	34	35
36	37	BP	260.00	1.00	14	36	37
38	39	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	38	39
40	41	Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	40	41
42	43	Barclays Bank	200.00	1.00	14	42	43
44	45	Shell	200.00	1.00	14	44	45
46	47	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	46	47
48	49	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	48	49
50	51	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	50	51
52	53	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	52	53
54	55	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	54	55
56	57	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	56	57
58	59	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	58	59
60	61	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	60	61
62	63	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	62	63
64	65	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	64	65
66	67	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	66	67
68	69	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	68	69
70	71	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	70	71
72	73	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	72	73
74	75	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	74	75
76	77	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	76	77
78	79	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	78	79
80	81	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	80	81
82	83	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	82	83
84	85	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	84	85
86	87	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	86	87
88	89	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	88	89
90	91	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	90	91
92	93	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	92	93
94	95	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	94	95
96	97	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	96	97
98	99	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	98	99
100	101	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	100	101
102	103	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	102	103
104	105	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	104	105
106	107	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	106	107
108	109	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	108	109
110	111	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	110	111
112	113	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	112	113
114	115	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	114	115
116	117	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	116	117
118	119	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	118	119
120	121	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	120	121
122	123	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	122	123
124	125	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	124	125
126	127	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	126	127
128	129	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	128	129
130	131	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	130	131
132	133	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	132	133
134	135	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	134	135
136	137	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	136	137
138	139	BP Amoco	200.00	1.00	14	138	139
140	141	Unilever	200.00	1.00	14	140	141



## Collins doing the business on the water

**George Collins** is the man who liked the Whitbread Round the World Race so much he spent \$5m on a yacht and a top-line crew.

**Stuart Alexander** talks to the American investment manager, who is beating the cream of ocean racing at their own game.

When the Whitbread fleet of ocean racers crosses Chesapeake Bay next April to finish the seventh leg in Baltimore, George Collins will, he says, "almost be able to reach over the guard rail and shake the hands of my friends as we race to the finishing line. As a matter of fact it goes right by my house."

Here is a man, a competitor and fan, who liked the idea of joining the world's best in the best round-the-world race so much that he bought himself a place on the start line, his city a major role as host and his favourite piece of water the starring role of being wittily large on the side of his 64-foot yacht, Chessie Racing.

But this is not just the whim of a dilettante. To be the chief executive officer of a multi-million dollar company you have built up yourself needs a competitive streak. He insists that this is not just a game to take his mind off things now that he is semi-retired at the age of 57 from the investment management business he created. That he is not another example of the blazer brigade meddling in

sport because they have nothing else to do.

"I could have bought a minor league baseball team, but I couldn't play and would probably only have ended up interfering in the training," he said. "I'm not a spectator; I would rather be out there participating. But at my age there are very few games in which you can still participate and enjoy it."

Not that Collins has not had to modify his expectation about when he can play in the team, and when he can not. At the moment he is waiting to fly to Cape Town to welcome in his boat, skippered by Mark Fischer, at the end of the 7,350-mile first leg, but he will not be joining them for the second leg across the rough and testing southern ocean.

The delivery trip across the Atlantic Collins undertook aboard Chessie Racing taught him his limitations on what can be a bucking bronco of a beast when the wind whips up. On one 24-hour run they topped 400 exhilarating, but nerve and muscle-jangling miles.

"This is a non user-friendly, full-on racing machine. This type of boat is very difficult," he says. Instead of racing, Collins' contribution is cold, dispassionate management skills and a funding programme that ensured that every development worth doing was done and a top-line crew properly paid.

Collins has had to dig deeper into his pockets than he first thought. He put up the basic \$2m (£1.3m) to pay for the boat, expecting other sponsors would jump aboard clutching another \$3m. They did not, but "it's been a good stock market, so I

have stepped up," Collins says.

That has meant no reasonable request being refused, staying calm when gear was breaking during the bedding-down period when he was "lapping up my dollars".

The planning was meticu-



George Collins on board Chessie Racing: 'At my age there are very few games in which you can still participate and enjoy it' . Photograph: Peter Jay

"This is serious stuff. It doesn't come more serious than this," Collins says, "and I don't want things to blow up when it counts. Then you are in deep trouble."

The planning was meticu-

lous, the training serious and his crew have been in the top five since the race started in Southampton on 21 September. Chessie Racing is ahead of the favourite Toshiba, skippered by Chris Dickson, and

the 1994 Whitbread winner Ross Field on America's Challenge. Only bad luck will stop them maintaining their position to Cape Town.

This is not an amateur affair, but there is, however, the inevitable vein of romance. The picture of a monster on the side of the yacht recalls how grandfather Wilson came from Glasgow as a baby, along with a bottle of water from Loch Ness which was poured onto Chesapeake Bay. For Nessie

Language, was predicting 20 hours of uncertain winds as the back markers in the 10-boat fleet reduced the gap and Britain's Lawrie Smith tripped from fourth place, to outflank the problem.

Cayard, leading by 14 miles from Grant Dalton on Merit Cup, was battling to make headway. "We are going nowhere - fighting to go 100 metres in 10 minutes during the last four hours," he reported.

Collins' boat was fifth yesterday, 173 miles behind the leader, EF Language, as light airs slowed the fleet on the final 2,500 miles to Cape Town.

Paul Cayard, the skipper of

Goss and Dinelli stand out among big boats

The stormy baptism for the Anglo-French pairing of Pete Goss and Raphael Dinelli, the man he rescued last Christmas, was looking good yesterday after the first 48 hours of the Jacques Vabre two-handed transatlantic race.

Yesterday he was disputing third place with Yves Parlier and Eric Tabary in Aquitaine Innovations as these two took

at the start in Le Havre on Saturday his main target was to be among the top monohulls at the end of the 4,500-mile run to Cartagena, Colombia, knowing that most of the opposition were 60-footers.

Yesterday he was disputing third place with Yves Parlier and Eric Tabary in Aquitaine Innovations as these two took

the more westerly option after a rough rounding of Ushant. Leading the monohulls are Jean Maurel in Saipuquet and Marc Thiercelin in Somewhere.

The multihull leader by a long way, was Loick Peyron in Fujicolour, chased by Francis Joyon in Banque Populaire and Paul Vatin in Chausse d'Europe.

— Stuart Alexander

WHITEBREAD ROUND THE WORLD RACE (CONT'D FROM P17) Last night positions: 1 EF Language (Swe) P Cayard +268 miles to finish; 2 Merit Cup (Morocco) G Dalton +14 miles; 3 Chessie Racing (USA) M Fischer +17; 5 America's Challenge (US) R Field +475; 6 Toshiba (GB) C Dickson +501; 7 EF Education (Swe) C Gullou +425; 10 Brunel Sunergy (Neth) H Bouwmeester +552

## ICE HOCKEY

### Devils given boost by Thornton

Steve Thornton helped to steer the champions, Cardiff Devils, to a 6-3 Superleague win over Bracknell Bears on Sunday.

Thornton, who suffered an arm injury last week, was back in action at the earliest opportunity and hit the target after just eight seconds.

Elsewhere, Jamie Steer scored twice for Ayr Scottish Eagles, who managed to complete a well-deserved weekend double over Nottingham Panthers. Having beaten them 4-2 in the Benson and Hedges Cup quarter-final first leg on Saturday, they won 6-3 in their home Superleague encounter the following evening.

Kevin Conway grabbed the first and last goals for Basingstoke Bison in their 4-3 home win over Manchester Storm after overtime.

Conway gave Bison the lead after just 54 seconds and then struck the game-winning goal after two minutes and one second of overtime.

Newcastle Cobras are still pointless after two Superleague games. They lost 4-1 away to Sheffield Steelers, for whom Scott Allison scored twice.

Brett Stewart scored for the Cobras whose man-of-the-match, their net-minder Wayne Cowley, was in inspired form against his former club:

BENSON & HEDGES CUP QUARTER-FINALS First leg: 1 Ayr 4 Nottingham 2; Newcastle 4 Basingstoke 1; Bracknell 2.

SUPER LEAGUE: Ayr 6 Nottingham 3; Sheffield 4 Newcastle 1; Basingstoke 4 Manchester 3 (ot); Cardiff 6 Bracknell 3.

## PHILIPS



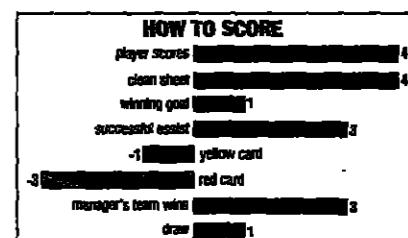
Today we publish the latest results of The Independent Fantasy Football League. Due to the weekend's international matches, the player scores remain unchanged and therefore both individual scores and the league table are calculated from all games played until October 5th.

Every time one of your players score you get four points. There are four points for a keeper or a defender every time their team keeps a clean sheet. If a player scores the winning goal, i.e.: if there is a one goal difference in the scoreline, the player scoring the final goal for the winning team is awarded 1 bonus point awarded in addition to standard goal related points. Each successful Assist, a pass judged by our experts to lead directly to a goal, will give a player 3 points. The opinion of our experts on the matter is final. Each player selected and starting a game will be awarded one point.

If a player is given a Yellow Card they lose 1 point, if a player is given a Red Card they lose 3 points. Own goals, either scored or conceded, do not count.

The Premiership Manager that you choose will be awarded 3 points if their real-life team wins, 1 point is awarded if they draw and no points are given if they lose.

Updated player scores and league tables will be published every Tuesday in *The Independent* and repeated the following Sunday in the *Independent on Sunday*.



## INDEPENDENT FANTASY FOOTBALL

OVERALL SCORE CALCULATED ON MATCHES PLAYED FROM 8 AUGUST - 5 OCTOBER

LEAGUE TABLE						
POS	NAME	TEAM	W	W%	VALUE	(pts)
CALCULATED ON MATCHES PLAYED FROM 8 AUGUST - 5 OCTOBER						
1	Mr Chris King	Seizing Victory	49			
1	Mr Phil Tufner	Pin Ups 4	49			
1	Mr David Evans	Boozers Old Boys	49			
1	Mr John Cox	Southville FC	49			
5	Mr B Srai	Simply the Best	43			
6	Mr B Srai	The Unouchables	47			
6	Mr Stewart Scott	The Dream Team	47			
6	Mr David Aston	Bill Boys 2nd II	47			
9	Mr Stewart Scott	Unbeatable	46			
10	Mr David Baker	Dead Bees	42			
11	Mr March Pawley	Roberts Rovers	42			
11	Mr Chris Thomas	Scunthorpe Extras	42			
13	Mr Archer	No Wright	42			
14	Miss Lisa Wild	Americetto	42			
15	Mr Michael Rickard	Aller Lambreg	42			
16	Mr Mike Mitchell	Enduring Image	48			
16	Mr G Whitehead	The Treen Team	48			
18	Mr P Green	Powis Rangers	46			
18	Mr Ken Boyle	Clegwyn Rovers	46			
18	Mr G Bell	Scunthorpe Scouts	46			
21	Mr K Brady	The Final Selection	45			
21	Mr Brady	Look Lively	45			
23	Mr E Groutley	Celtic Warriors	43			
23	Mr Trevor Russ	Sammy's Soccer Scorchers	43			
25	Mr Killary	Killer Bees	42			
25	Mr J McClelland	Washed Up Army	42			
25	Mr David	Borham Barham United	42			
28	Mr Abdal Choudi	Nickies 9th II	49			
29	Mr A Reynolds	The Hedgehogs	49			
30	Mr Tom Lyons	Tom's Pecker Badle Ships	48			
31	Mr J McCrossan	Washed Up Army	40			
34	Mr A Cunningham	The Zebra	47			
33	Mr A Stennett	Beep Bar Poop	406			
34	Mr Steven Man	Rebecca Rovers	405			
34	Mr David Baker	Deja Vu	405			
36	Mr Chris Thomas	Scunthorpe Special Rel	404			
37	Mr Ian Boile	Wendy Bundlers	403			
37	Mr A Wriggote	Tony's Brace	403			
37	Mr Tom Lyons	Dishar Demons	403			
37	Mr Tony Brazier	Wow For Shors	402			
41	Mr Robin Johnson	Golden Moons	402			

CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	W	W%	VALUE	(pts)
GOALKEEPERS						
454	Anderson	BLA	0	4	25	50
455	Cox	BLA	0	1	25	50
303	Liddle	ARS	0	0	10	0
304	Mannering	ARS	0	0	10	0
305	Watson	AV	0	2	15	30
307	Watson	BAR	0	1	10	20
308	Loose	BAR	0	0	10	0
309	Hill	BLA	0	0	15	30
310	Brasgau	BOL	0	0	15	30
311	De Gey	CHE	0	0	15	30
312	Coyle	CHE	0	0	15	30
313	Curzovic	COV	0	0	15	30
314	Hedman	COV	0	0	15	30
315	Nest	CRT	0	0	15	30
316	Coyle	CRT	0	0	15	30
317	Houli	DER	0	0	15	30
318	Southall	EVN	0	0	15	30
319						

given  
by  
ton

## Tamarisk appeals in vintage Dewhurst

**Saturday's Dewhurst Stakes at Newmarket promises to uphold its tradition in signposting future Classic winners.**

**Greg Wood reports.**

Racehorses can make fools of anyone, so there will have been relief at Newmarket yesterday when the five-day entries for their newly-christened Champions Day card on Saturday indicated that the immodesty will go unpunished. The Dewhurst Stakes promises competition and information in equally large measures, the Champion Stakes too could yet be a contest to make a long trip for, while the Cesarewitch will as usual cater for racegoers who enjoy the surreal ex-

perience of betting on a two-and-a-quarter mile race and first spotting a horse with half a mile left to run.

It is the Dewhurst, though, which should add serious numbers to the gate, and ensure that the international Handicappers will not need to deliberate for too long when they meet to name the top two-year-old colt of 1997. Diggers Drawn, probably the best seen in Britain this year, and Xaar, perhaps the finest in France, will line up against Central Park, whose collateral form gives him the beating of Diggers Drawn, and Tamarisk, impressive winner of the Houghton Sales Stakes at the last Newmarket meeting.

Diggers Drawn was no better than workmanlike when winning the Champagne Stakes at the Doncaster St Leger

meeting, but is still the clear Dewhurst favourite or joint favourite, with Xaar, in the lists of the leading bookmakers.

The contest also brings the best trainers on either side of

**RICHARD EDMONDSON**  
NAP: Tycoonees  
(Ayr 3.20)  
NB: Seconds Away  
(Ayr 4.50)

the Channel into direct competition, and on recent Dewhurst form it is André Fabre, who prepares Xaar, who will wake up in confident mood on Saturday morning. Henry Cuthbertson's Diggers Drawn, who has not won this race since 1982, while Fabre has saddled both Zafonic (1992) and Pennekamp (1994), both of whom returned to win the 2,000 Guineas.

This seems to be a welcome return to form for the Dewhurst, which over a five-year period between 1990 and 1994 was won by two subsequent Derby winners, two Guineas winners and a St James's Palace Stakes winner.

The handicapper would probably have six or seven pounds behind Xaar, five behind Central Park and three or four behind Henry Cecil's, so he needs to improve two or three lengths to win, but he's done everything we've asked of him and he hasn't had a hard race. We don't know what he'll produce when it's really required, but he's earned his place."

Saturday's second Group One race, the Champion Stakes, could be just as strongly contested as the Dewhurst, with Singspiel, Pitsudski and Benny The Dip among the five-day entries, but as yet only

yesterday, "and there is more to be gained than lost by running him. The horse that wins will be the champion two-year-old, and to finish third or fourth is no disgrace in a race like that."

"The handicapper would probably have six or seven pounds behind Xaar, five behind Central Park and three or four behind Henry Cecil's, so he needs to improve two or three lengths to win, but he's done everything we've asked of him and he hasn't had a hard race. We don't know what he'll produce when it's really required, but he's earned his place."

Saturday's second Group One race, the Champion Stakes, could be just as strongly contested as the Dewhurst, with Singspiel, Pitsudski and Benny The Dip among the five-day entries, but as yet only

the Derby winner is a definite runner. "I'd strongly consider going to the Canadian International at Woodbine because it's a race he could win," John Gosden, Benny The Dip's trainer, said yesterday. "But the other two keep to go to the Breeders' Cup and I didn't want to take a three-year-old, fly him out to Canada, bring him back and then turn him around in 12 days to send him off to California."

Thirty-four remain in the Cesarewitch, and the declaration of Canon Can, the Doncaster Cup winner, ensures there is no rise in the weights. The good news for punters is that all the prominent names in the ante-post market are still in the field.

John Rickman, former anchor man for ITV's racing programme, has died aged 84.

## RACING'S FUTURES MARKET

Thrapole looks overpriced at 40-1 with Ladbrokes for the Cesarewitch at Newmarket on Saturday, Coral offer just 20-1.

Following his victory in the Grand Criterium over a mile at Longchamp, Single Empire is 6-1 with Coral for next year's 1,000 Guineas - the tote offer just 4-1, while Cape Verdi, who looks the sort to do better over a mile, is 12-1 with Coral, and the tote offer just 7-1.

- Ian Davies

### LEICESTER

**HYPERION**  
3.30 Priene  
4.00 Champagne Warrior  
4.30 Priolo Prima  
5.00 Brimming

**GOING:** Good to soft. **STALLS:** Inside. **DRAW ADVANTAGE:** None. Right-hand, undulating course, with a straight run-in. Run-in of 250yds. **COURSE:** Is 2m SE of city of Ayr. Levee road, 1m N of town. **TRAINER:** Mr J. N. Parker - Shetland line

**LEADING TRAINERS:** R Hanson 37-19 (56%), J Dunlop 26-37 (30%), H Cull 21-22 (25%)

**LEADS & JOCKEYS:** L. Dettori 38-176 (21%), J Westover 13-87 (20.7%), J Reid 15-13 (14.2%), G. Moore 12-109 (11%), M Hills 12-116 (10.3%)

**FAVOURITES:** 16-1 (20%). **RECORD:** 10-11 (11).

**BLINKED FIRST TIME:** Nonrunner (visored) [400].

**1.30 EBF REFERENCE POINT MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) (Div II) £4,600 added 2YO 7f Penalty Value £23,704**

1. ABU CAM (I) [John McLean] 10-11 (11) - 1. A. Dally 15-14 (14)

2. ACADEMY (B2) [Markus Thomsen] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

3. ALCAZAR (17) [Loly Cohen] J. Dettori 11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

4. BRAVE NOBLE (USA) [Midsumma] E. Dunlop 8-11 (11) - 1. M. Rimmer 12 (10)

5. BRONZE ASSEMBLY (B2) [Samuel H. Smith] 10-11 (11) - 1. R. Dettori 9 (10)

6. CASHMERE (B2) [Helen Alcock] 10-11 (11) - 1. R. Dettori 9 (10)

7. DASHING KNIGHT (B2) [Peter Phillips Partnership] R. Aspinwall 8-11 (11) - 1. R. Dettori 9 (10)

8. DARING ARROW (P) [P. McManus & V. Vida] 8-11 (11) - 1. M. Fawcett 2 (10)

9. KRISMAKA (29) [Lily] P. McManus 8-11 (11) - 1. M. Fawcett 2 (10)

10. LONGBOWMAN (Dove) [Kris] Ms L. Stobbs 8-11 (11) - 1. M. Whitham 3 (10)

11. MULAHEN (B2) [M. Alcock] 8-11 (11) - 1. R. Dettori 8 (10)

12. RITUAL (E) [R. P. McManus] 8-11 (11) - 1. R. Dettori 8 (10)

13. SAUDI (17) [R. P. McManus] 8-11 (11) - 1. R. Dettori 8 (10)

14. SILENT WARNING (Epsilon Thoroughbred) S. M. Prescott 8-11 (11) - 1. G. Doffield 6 (10)

**BETTING:** 4-2 (20%). **RECORD:** 11-12 (12).

**GUIDE:** 10-1 (11).

**CELTIC PAGEANT:** 1st, in the Middle Park (6%), 1st, the winner of this on her seven-furlong trip against Name A Epsom and Sefton at Ascot. With the drop in class and track record broken, Colgate Park will take a lot of convincing if he handles the ground. This has another chance. Dancers Drawn is a strong runner, but behind Floraz. Some promise was shown and Dashing Knight could be the surprise package on ground sure to suit him. John Dunlops chance is to be respected and Alcazar and Alcyone is a certainty to improve on his debut four to the odds-on last Christmas at Haydock (7%).

**Selection:** CELTIC PAGEANT

**2.00 WYMESWOLD STAKES (CLASS C) £7,000 added 2YO 2f Penalty Value £4,518**

1. ABSOLUTELY SPARKLE (19) [M. J. Dawson] 10-11 (11) - 1. J. Dettori 12 (11)

2. BALKAN (20) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

3. BLOOMFIELD (17) [L. L. Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

4. CROWN (20) [Helen Alcock] R. Armstrong 9-10 (10) - 1. R. Dettori 10 (11)

5. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

6. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

7. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

8. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

9. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

10. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

11. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

12. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

13. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

14. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

15. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

16. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

17. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

18. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

19. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

20. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

21. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

22. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

23. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

24. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

25. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

26. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

27. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

28. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

29. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

30. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

31. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

32. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

33. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

34. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

35. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

36. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

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48. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 10-11 (11) - 1. N. Parker 14-13 (13)

49. DAZZLING (10) [Colin Parker] 1

## Welsh clubs have hardly distinguished themselves in either European competition



ALAN  
WATKINS  
ON  
RUGBY

The story goes that a party of my fellow countrymen journeyed to Paris for Wales' match with France. One of their number went missing and, after some argument, his companions returned home without him, reasoning that he was a big boy who could look after himself. When he duly turned up early the following week, his friends asked him what had happened. "I can tell you this much," he replied. "The art of sexual intercourse is in its infancy in Ystradgynlais."

On the evidence so far provided by the two European competitions, I am tempted to say the same of the art of rugby union football in Wales generally. For the Welsh clubs

have hardly distinguished themselves either in the Heineken Cup or in the European Conference. True, Cardiff, Llanelli and Pontypridd are all in the last 11 of the former competition, England being represented by four clubs (Bath, Harlequins, Leicester and Wasps), France by three (Brive, Pau and Toulouse) and Scotland by one (Glasgow). But of the five clubs certain to go through to the quarter-finals, three are English, two French.

There will be at least one Welsh club at this stage of the competition, because Cardiff meet Llanelli in a play-off at Cardiff. Fifty years ago, when Cardiff fielded their greatest side (even though they would

not have been fit enough or big enough to last out today), such a meeting would have drawn a crowd of 20,000. They will be lucky to see half that number in these supposedly professional times.

Llanelli I have not seen this season. They seem to have been having an up-and-down time, slightly luckier than their neighbours, Swansea, who appear to have become a walking journalistic cliché as "the perpetual under-achievers of the competition".

I did, however, see Cardiff play Bourgoin in France, on French television. Just as I can tell you that Colomiers is a suburb of Toulouse and not, as the BBC seems to imagine,

of Paris, so also can I supply the information of where Bourgoin is actually situated. It is 44 kilometres east of Lyons and its full name is Bourgoin-Jallieu.

The team put up a spirited performance against Cardiff and were responsible for most of the open play. Cardiff relied on the boot of Lee Jarvis, who saw them home by one undeserved point. The Welsh side played poorly.

I was in France for the famous Brive against Pontypridd encounter, but managed to catch only the televised excerpts. It seemed to me clear that the nonsense was started by the Pontypridd No 8 Dale McIntosh.

It was equally evident,

though I was not there and may have been misled by the French press, that later that evening some Pontypridd players and supporters entered a bar where numerous Brive players were enjoying a quiet drink and proceeded to belabour them, as a consequence of which, several of them had to be removed to hospital and were unfit to face Pontypridd in their subsequent encounter, which turned out to be a draw.

If the facts are as I have stated them, (and I have read nothing to cast any substantial doubt on this version), there is no question in my mind but that Pontypridd should have been expelled from the

competition for this season: not for their behaviour on the field, lamentable though this was, but for their conduct off it, which was quite intolerable. Brive and Bath would then be deemed to have beaten Pontypridd, and, depending on points difference, one of them would be meeting Swanses in a play-off.

As it is, Brive play Pontypridd in France for a place in the last eight. This may be the one draw that nobody wanted made, but I look forward to the encounter. My prediction is that both sides will be on their best behaviour.

Though I do not uneasy anything about Pontypridd's conduct off the field, and what its consequences should

have been, I recognise that when a British Isles club side meet a French side on French soil, it must come as something of what is now called a culture shock.

In France, journalists are admitted to the dressing-room. A few years ago I found myself mingling with the players in the steam after Bégles had just beaten Toulouse in the semi-finals of the French Cup. All three members of Bégles' notorious front row, two of whom were later to land themselves in serious international trouble, had been protecting their most vulnerable parts with cricket boxes. That just shows you what these Frenchmen can get up to.

## Has the Coca-Cola Cup run out of fizz?

The winners of the Coca-Cola Cup will not qualify for Europe next season, which has taken the gloss off a competition that was already losing its appeal for larger football clubs. Guy Hodgson assesses its future.

The Coca-Cola Cup begins its third round tonight although you would be hard put to find figures of real consequence who care very much. It may still set pulses racing in Hull and Stoke but among the big clubs it is quickly becoming an irksome irrelevance. It is a competition that is out of Europe, out of mind and probably out of time.

Take Ipswich Town. If Manchester United were visiting Portman Road in the FA Cup, Suffolk would be alive with anticipation at seeing Teddy Sheringham, Ryan Giggs etc get a potential come-uppance. The match has sold all 22,000 tickets yet it would be more of a surprise if Alex Ferguson did not field a reserve team.

United's recent attitude to the competition has been ambivalent at best. In 1994 they took an XI to Port Vale that was so short of first-teamers that the home club reported them to the Football League for fielding a weakened side. The fact that United won 2-1 undermined the case and the authorities at Lytham St Annes let the matter drop.

To complicate the issue, seven of the team which included such non-names as Neville, Butt, Beckham, Scholes and Gillespie won the

round at the same time as us, decide to field their best sides."

If the clubs are losing interest, then there is evidence to suggest supporters are going the same way. Manchester City attracted only 12,563 for the home leg against Blackpool in the first round, half their normal attendance, while Bolton could tempt just 6,444 people to the spanking new Reebok Stadium for the visit of Leyton Orient.

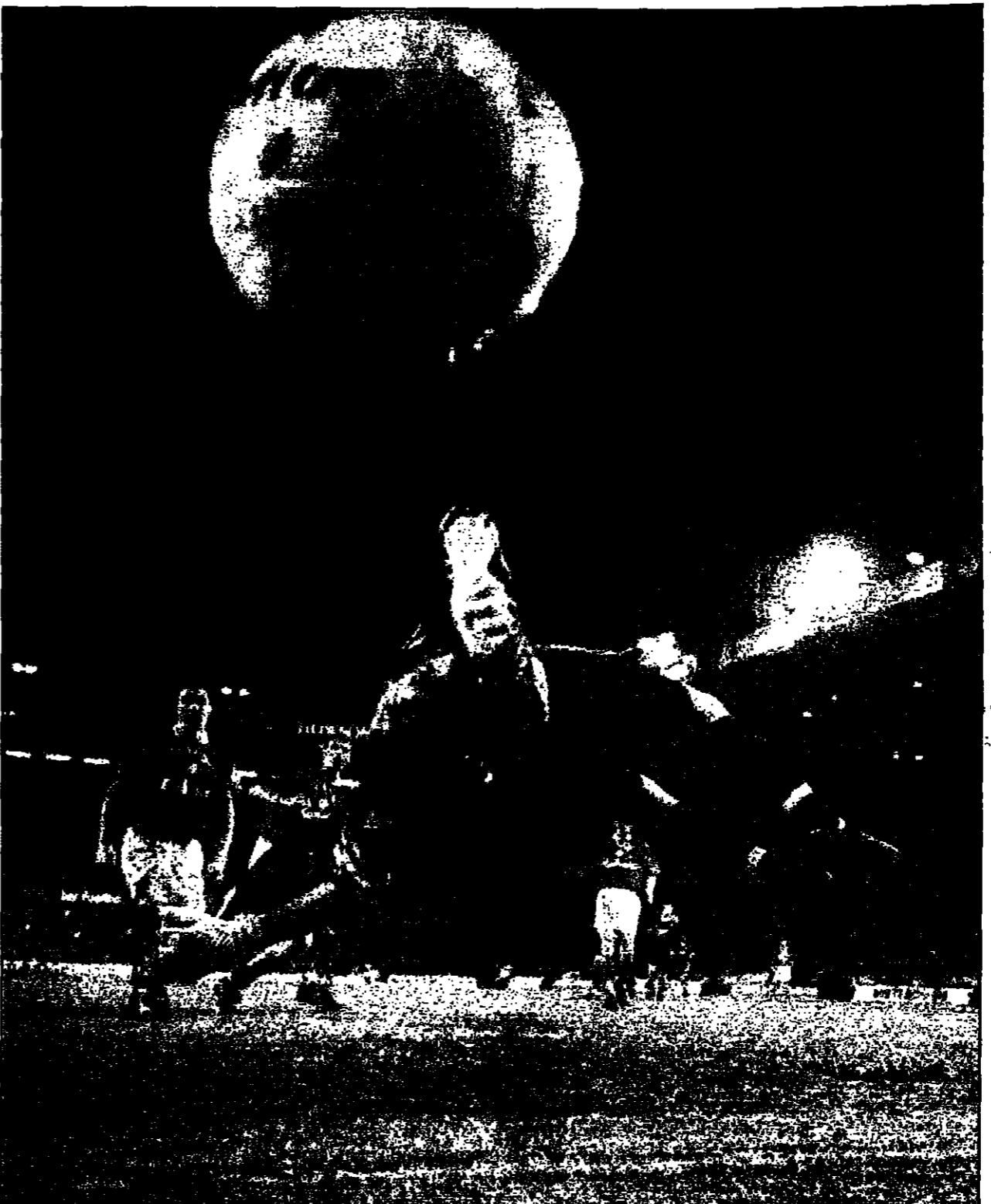
The League's solution has been to go to the European Commission in an attempt to have the Uefa Cup place restored although it is unlikely they will succeed as Europe's governing body has already said they will do so if the Premiership is reduced from 20 to 18 clubs.

Newcastle have more reason than most to succeed, as they have not won a major trophy for all Sir John Hall's millions, yet they may use tomorrow night's tie against Hull to help Stuart Pearce and Alessandro Pistone's recuperation from injury. Liverpool will probably leave out Steve McManaman at West Bromwich.

Even Arsenal, who are out of Europe, are lukewarm. Arsène Wenger will rest 11 internationals tonight against Birmingham City including Emmanuel Petit who will have a bone scan today to discover whether he fractured an ankle playing for France on Saturday.

"I don't care if I am criticised," Wenger said. "I work for Arsenal and must do the best job for them, which means giving players the rest that they need. We would like to win the Coca-Cola Cup but it is not a big competition now that Uefa have said there will be no place in Europe at the end of it for the winners.

There is a future for the League Cup, but it is along the lines of a glorified Full Members Cup.



Steve Claridge scored the winning goal in last year's Coca-Cola Cup final replay that took Leicester City into Europe this season. With that reward taken away, however, the competition is losing credibility

Photograph: Michael Steele/Empics

### RUGBY LEAGUE

#### Good news for Goodway as scrum-half Crompton has change of heart

Oldham's players have won the right to play their trade elsewhere, giving Great Britain a boost on the eve of naming their squad to face Australia next month.

The Oldham captain, Martin Crompton, one of the only two scrum-halves in the preparatory squad that will be whittled down to 22 today, had pulled out of contention, saying that he was disillusioned with the game.

However, he has now been

persuaded to make himself available again, following the decision of the liquidators yesterday to withdraw their appeal against the players' attempts to become free agents.

A tribunal which was meant to decide the issue today has been cancelled and players such as Crompton, who has interested both Salford and Halifax, Paul Davidson, who has signed registration forms for St Helens, and Paul Atcheson will be able to start careers elsewhere.

Others may discuss terms with anyone who comes to the rescue of the relegated and debt-ridden club before next season, but any revived club will have lost its most valuable assets.

Crompton is an Irish international, but unproven at the highest level. The Great Britain coach, Andy Goodway, was keen to have him available, however, because of a chronic shortage of alternatives.

With Shaun Edwards and Tony Smith both needing knee

operations, Bobbie Goulding was left, when Crompton withdrew, as the only fit scrum-half in the squad.

His latest suspension means

that he has not played since 24 August, a gap of almost 10 weeks to the date of the first Test at Wembley on 1 November. Nor was the turbulent Goulding in the most convincing of form before his ban, so going into a Test series without cover for him would have been unthinkable.

Without Crompton's change of heart, Goodway would have to look outside his original squad, calling up a novice like Sean Long. Goulding's understudy at St Helens, a gifted prospect but raw.

Another club's future is in

doubt, with Prescot going into administration under pressure from a brewery. The club's chairman, Geoff Fletcher, insists that Prescot have no debts and will fight for their survival.

— Dave Hadfield

## Disgruntled Villeneuve ready to consider leaving Formula One

Whether or not Jacques Villeneuve becomes world champion in the last race of the season, he may not choose to continue racing in Formula One. David Tremayne examines a climactic end to the drivers' championship.

Jacques Villeneuve's chances of keeping the two points he scored for finishing fifth in Sunday's Japanese Grand Prix are remote. Suzuka should have yielded the 26-year-old

French-Canadian the world championship crown, but instead he raced under appeal after receiving a ban for yet another offence of ignoring a yellow caution flag.

The regulations specifically demand that drivers slow down for waved yellow flags, which warn of potential hazards ahead.

Villeneuve ignored one in Argentina and another in Imola earlier this year, and when he ignored a third at Monza in September he received a one-race ban, suspended for a probationary period of nine races. When he sped past Jos Verstappen's abandoned Tyrrell on Saturday morning

ignoring the black flag which demands that a driver stop racing immediately. A \$25,000 fine (£14,750) was multiplied by 10, and Schumacher was banned for two races. More recently, Mika Hakkinen raced under appeal in the Belgian Grand Prix following a fuel infringement in practice. When McLaren's appeal was heard, Hakkinen lost his third place and the team's fine was doubled to \$50,000. There is a clear lesson here: mess with the FIA at your peril. It is easier to find Lord Lucan than a successful appellant.

"We think an appeal was a good idea," Villeneuve insisted. "because

five other drivers did the same thing at the same time on the track. It was important for us to race in Japan, because you never know whether the FIA might allow to keep the two points, and let me off the suspension."

In the real world this is regarded as little more than folly. Williams and Benetton are bound to end in tears. And the incident may not just cost Villeneuve the world title.

Speculation even before Suzuki suggested strongly that he may be having second thoughts about continuing in Formula One. He detests the narrow cars which the FIA is introducing for 1998, and their

grooved tyres, and has frequently clashed on the subject with the FIA president, Max Mosley. Above all, he resists the danger element of motor racing, and has often hinted, publicly, and privately to friends, that he might reconsider his future if he lost the thrill of driving. Few drivers really possess the strength of character to walk away when an indulgent and lucrative lifestyle turns sour, but Jacques Villeneuve is enough of a maverick to do just that, regardless of the contract that he has to drive for Williams in 1998.

"Definitely I find it very difficult to accept," he said. "It's a heavy blow

now that we are fighting like this at the end, for the championship."

"We have seen in the past before, in the last race that the man who is a point ahead can afford to be very aggressive with the one who is behind." Williams technical director, Patrick Head, said on Sunday night, "and if both cars don't finish... We saw that with Damon at Adelaide in 1994. I view that as deliberate removal of one competitor by another." But the difference is that where Hill plugged on to win his title two years later, there is a real chance that Villeneuve just might choose not to stay around that long.



## RUGBY UNION

### Bath deny Rowell takeover rumour as Bristol hit hard times

Rugby union's sugar-daddy investors are showing signs of nerves as their balance sheets slide ever deeper into the red.

With the Allied Dunbar Premiership awash with rumours of takeover bids, rescue packages and impending bankruptcies, Chris Hewett examines the latest upheavals in a volatile financial landscape.

It is Black October in rugby's hard-up heartlands and for the money men in the boardrooms, life at the sharp end of a fledgling professional sport is becoming less and less of a novelty. Bristol announced losses of £486,671 yesterday and later this week, their infinitely better-heeled neighbours from Bath are likely to confess to an operating deficit of around three times that amount. No wonder the entrepreneurs are feeling jittery.

While Bristol insist they are close to securing the sort of seven-figure cash injection that would prevent them going to the wall, senior figures at Bath

are questioning the long-term commitment of Andrew Brownsword, the elusive greetings card tycoon who bought 75 per cent of the club for £2.5m just over a year ago. Yesterday, Brownsword scotched rumours that he was about to cut and run, but his denial was not enough to quash suggestions of a takeover bid.

Jack Rowell, the former England coach who spent 17 years of his life transforming Bath from backwater nobodies into the most successful club side in world rugby, is widely believed to be investigating a possible return to the Recre-

ation Ground at the head of a powerful consortium, including a High Street bank and a wealthy local businessman with strong family ties to the club.

"I'm in business-building mode at the moment," said Rowell yesterday. "I've certainly had no discussions with Bath Pic and I do not foresee any imminent involvement on my part. In fact, I'm thoroughly enjoying my break from the game." He is, however, thought to have made Brownsword aware of his interest.

Certainly, the grapevine was talkative enough to force Brownsword's men into issuing

a rapid denial. Tom Sheppard, the club's company secretary, said: "I can categorically say that no meetings have taken place with any potential investor. Neither have we been approached to set up a meeting. Quite simply, Mr Brownsword's share of the club is not for sale. He did not become involved with rugby on a short-term basis."

However, Bath will have to raise extra capital if they are to realise their dream of leaving the cramped, futureless confines of the council-owned Rec and build a purpose-built stadium on some of the disused land in and around the city. Un-

less Brownsword is prepared to pump even more of his vast fortune into the club, a second major financial player will have to be brought on board.

Meanwhile, Arthur Holmes, the nearest thing Bristol have to a Brownsword-style investor, warned that clubs will continue to find it "impossible to equate expenditure and income". He blamed a chaotic fixture list and reduced financial support from the Rugby Football Union as prime causes of what is fast developing into a widespread financial crisis.

Holmes, who chairs Bristol's management board, has seen the

## BOXING

### Wright's brother retires

The brother of Carl Wright, who remains critically ill in hospital after a championship fight on Saturday, has vowed he will give up the sport.

Paul Wright watched his younger brother challenge for the British light welterweight title on the same bill as Nathan Hamed and Chris Eubank in the Sheffield Arena.

After losing on points to Mark Winters, the 28-year-old collapsed while driving back to Merseyside with his trainer, Colin Moorcroft.

Surgeons at Walton Hospital's neurology unit operated to remove a blood clot on his brain and a spokesman yesterday described the boxer as "critically ill".

Paul, a middleweight, said: "I will never box again. I couldn't put our family through this kind of pain again."

Paul lost a World Boxing Organisation Inter-Continental title challenge earlier this year and said: "I didn't want to retire on a loss but that's it for me now."

Both Paul and Carl, who has been dubbed "The Wildcat", had been pupils at Liverpool's Champion High School and started their boxing careers at Salisbury Amateur Boxing Club. They made their professional debuts in the ring in 1989.

Carl had been preparing for Saturday night's bout in a caravan in Wales. It was his first fight since losing the European title to Denmark's Soren Sondergaard on points almost a year ago.

Carl's wife, who is seven weeks pregnant, was monitoring his progress as he remained critically ill on a life support machine.

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Back

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Tuesday 14 October 1997

## Italy forced to play game of Russian roulette

The price Italy must pay for failing to win in Rome on Saturday is a two-leg play-off against Russia for the right to join England and Scotland at the World Cup finals. The Republic of Ireland face what might be an easier task, against Belgium. Rupert Metcalf looks ahead to the last laps of the long road to France.

"Russia, along with Croatia and Yugoslavia, were one of the three teams that I did not want to have to face. So I can't say it went well." Those were the words yesterday of Paolo Maldini, the captain of Italy, after the draw in Zurich for the home-and-away play-offs which will conclude the footballing marathon that has been the European qualifying competition for the 1998 World Cup.

The draw could have been far kinder to the Italians, and it has only added to the mood of pessimism which has afflicted the nation after England's draw in Rome on Saturday ensured that Glenn Hoddle's men reached France '98 without having to bother with the play-offs.

Italy must travel to chilly Moscow for the first leg on 29 October, where they will meet a home team keen to gain revenge for a 2-1 defeat to the Italians at last year's European Championship in England.

The Republic of Ireland

will be at home for the first leg of their play-off against Belgium, at Lansdowne Road on Wednesday 29 October. Their last two meetings with the Belgians both ended in draws during the qualifying stages for the 1988 European Championship.

Frank Stapleton and Liam Brady scored in a 2-2 draw in Brussels while the return game in Dublin was a 0-0 stalemate. But Jack Charlton's team went

on to qualify for the finals, where Ray Houghton's goal brought them a famous triumph against England.

Charlton's successor as the Republic's manager, Mick McCarthy, knows that he will never emerge from big Jack's shadow unless he, too, takes his team to the finals of a major tournament. He insists that the Belgians must not be underestimated.

"Although Belgium lost both home and away to Holland, they also had a 100 per cent record in their six games with Wales, Turkey and San Marino. They will be no soft touch," McCarthy warned - but he added:

"I'm quite pleased with the draw. We didn't want to go to somewhere like Russia or the Ukraine, playing on difficult surfaces with the temperature below freezing point.

"The fact that Wales have played Belgium twice in the qualifiers means that we should be able to get a lot of homework done on them," McCarthy said. "Bobby Gould is an old mate of mine. With his assistance, we should be able to know every-

thing about the Belgians before the first game in Dublin.

"Obviously, we need to be a little cautious in the away match but we will still be going on the attack looking for goals," McCarthy added. "Some of my players are so young they won't have any worries about playing the second leg away."

The Republic will implement the five-day rule in preparation for the first leg. That could rule a number of Irish

players out of important Premiership and First Division games. "We need the full five days' preparation. On this occasion there will be no exceptions to the rule. The players I want will all travel to Dublin," McCarthy vowed.

That could start a "club v country" row. The Premier League has confirmed that all fixtures on the weekend of 25, 26 and 27 October will go ahead as planned. There will be

no clash of interests for the return legs on 15 or 16 November, however, as there is no Premiership programme that weekend.

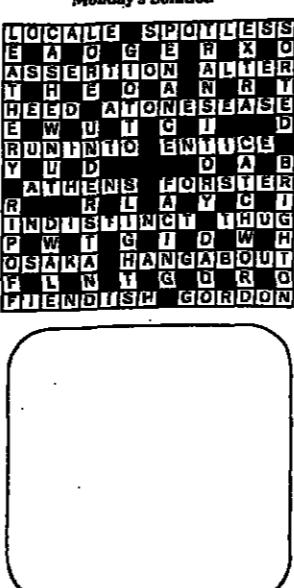
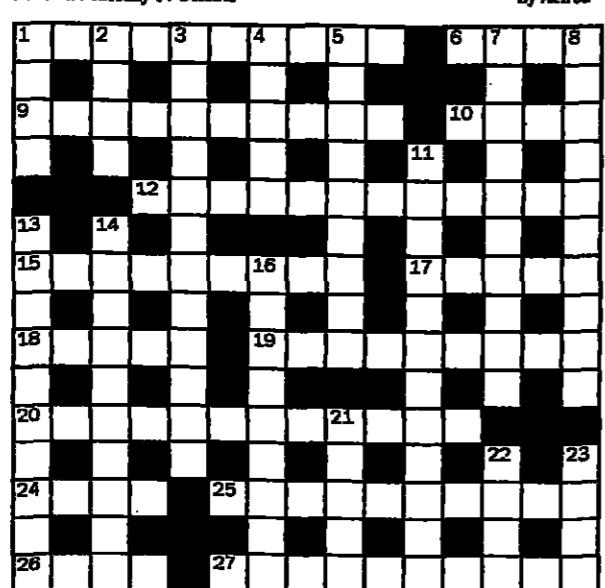
The draw managed to keep the Balkan countries apart. Croatia will be at home to Ukraine in the first leg, while Yugoslavia travel to Hungary, probably the weakest of the eight, on 29 October. The Yugoslavs will be strong favourites to reach France but Croatia

## THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3429, Tuesday 14 October

By Aledred

Monday's Solution



ACROSS  
1 Fellow in charge notes nothing American is false (10)  
6 One goes sideways, right into taxi (4)  
9 After short note one's engaged in moderate contract (10)  
10 Italian writer retains hard copy (4)  
12 In decline a man gets old and manipulated (5-7)  
15 Rage aroused by gibe of relative (5-4)  
17 Join European, rejected, forsaken (5)  
18 About to beat soundly a person with outmoded ideas (5)  
19 Able to struggle with the books of the church? (9)

5 Range of car presented by US state (6,6)  
24 Stuck in unpaid leisure? (4)  
25 Maybe lessen a POW with his gun taken away? (10)  
26 One leaves a terminal where a gathering forms? (4)  
27 Duly infer changes will keep a number cool (10)  
7 Note listeners apprehension (4)  
8 Liberal-minded clergy will be material (10)  
11 I'll represent what our parson stands for (12)  
13 So a trigger could lead to violence? (10)  
14 Produced flow about rotter being rich (4-6)  
16 A French firm will show lack of care (9)  
21 Two very high-ups and a snake (5)  
22 Incline to be tuppence short in the old shilling (4)  
23 Describing result when hay's burned? (4)

## CRICKET

### Hasan shines as 'youngest' double centurion

Pakistan's Hasan Raza, who became the youngest Test player when he faced Zimbabwe last year aged 14 years and 227 days, became the youngest scorer of a first-class double century yesterday - or maybe just one of the youngest because the absence of a birth certificate has cast doubt on his age.

He made an unbeaten 214, supposedly at the age of 15 years and 215 days, playing for

Karachi Whites against Bahawalpur in the national championship, which would break the 13-year record of another Pakistani, Ijaz Ahmed.

But doubt about his exact age has been present ever since he played in the Under-15 World Cup in England two years ago. Ten other boys originally selected for that squad were found to be over-age although Hasan was cleared. Six

of the Pakistan Under-19 party to the West Indies the same year were found to be too old.

After his debut against Zimbabwe in the second Test at Faisalabad - he scored 27 in his only innings - the Pakistan Cricket Board said medical tests showed him to be "about 15".

Majid Khan, the Pakistan Cricket Board chief executive, has said they do not accept Hasan's age.

## MORSE

### The first bug to invade a computer was crushed to death in the jaws of a relay in 1945

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